

STAYING HEALTHY

Managing Your Cholesterol



WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that the body uses to make hormones and other substances. High blood cholesterol can lead to heart disease. Two blood cholesterol measurements are:

LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol is the “bad” cholesterol because it leads to a buildup of cholesterol in the arteries.

HDL (high-density lipoprotein) cholesterol is the “good” cholesterol because it helps remove cholesterol from the body. An HDL of 60 mg/dL or higher will help lower your risk for heart disease.

WHAT AFFECTS CHOLESTEROL LEVELS?

Diet - Foods high in solid fat, like cheese, butter, pizza, and many fast foods, can make your cholesterol go up.

Weight - Being overweight is a risk factor for heart disease and can increase your cholesterol.

Physical Activity - Regular activity can lower your total cholesterol and can help you lose weight.

Age and Gender - As men and women get older, their cholesterol levels rise.

Heredity - Your genes partly determine how much cholesterol your body makes. High cholesterol can run in families.

HOW CAN I MANAGE MY CHOLESTEROL?

Healthy Eating

- Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products, lean meats, skinless poultry, and 8 ounces of seafood weekly.
- Read food labels to avoid trans fat found in processed foods like baked goods. Look for soft and liquid margarines.
- Increase fiber in your diet from fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Soluble fiber found in oats, dried peas, and beans can help lower your cholesterol.
- Learn more about healthy eating from the “Eating for Life” program.

For more information, visit
optimahealth.com/mylifemyplan

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Physical Activity

- Increase your physical activity to a total of 30 minutes a day most days of the week, in no less than 10-minute periods. Exercise can help you lose weight and lower your LDL level while raising your HDL level.

Take Care of Yourself

- Avoid tobacco products.
- Take medications as prescribed by your doctor.
- Get regular checkups with your physician.

Blood Cholesterol, nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/blood-cholesterol. U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2020 - 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 9th Edition. Available at dietaryguidelines.gov.

Staying Healthy Programs

For more information, visit wellnessforme.com

Eating for Life

Develop healthy eating and exercise habits

Get Off Your Butt: Stay Smokeless for Life

Quit tobacco to improve your health

Guided Meditation

Experience a retreat from everyday stressors

Healthy Habits Healthy You

Develop habits to prevent diabetes and heart disease

Tai Chi

Learn to mentally and physically relax

MoveAbout

Learn about staying physically active every day

Yoga

Stretching and strengthening exercises