



How Can I Lower My Cholesterol?

Ways to change your habits and improve your health

Lower cholesterol levels help you have the health you want. Here are some ways to change your habits and improve your health.

NINE things that help my body stay healthy:

1. A lot of different fruits and vegetables. You should have 4 or more servings of each every day*.
2. A variety of whole grains like whole-wheat products like bread, pasta and brown rice.
3. Fat-free and low-fat milk products.
4. Lean meats and poultry without skin.
5. Foods high in omega 3, such as tuna or salmon that is canned, baked or grilled.
6. Beans and peas.
7. Nuts and seeds in limited amounts.
8. Vegetable oils like canola, corn, olive, safflower and soybean oils.
9. Try replacing meat in one meal with a soy product like tofu or tempeh.

NINE things that limit my health:

1. Whole milk, cream, cheese and ice cream.
2. Fast food.
3. Refined carbs such as white rice, white bread, potatoes and pasta.
4. Processed meats such as sausage, bologna, salami and hot dogs.
5. Fatty meats with white fatty parts.
6. Salty foods such as chips, deli meats, pizza and snack foods.
7. Sugary or high-fat snacks such as candy, cookies and desserts.
8. Solid fats like butter, shortening, margarine and lard.
9. Fried foods.

Avoid portion distortion

Sometimes the portion size and serving size match; sometimes they do not. Big portion sizes can mean you're getting more food than needed to maintain a healthy weight. Learn how much to put on your plate to help control how much you eat.

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Serve smaller portions of foods that are high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt.

**These servings are based on a 2000 calories per day diet.*

Cholesterol-busting cooking

- Broil or grill instead of pan-frying.
- Use a rack to drain off fat when you broil, roast or bake.
- Don't baste with drippings. Use wine, fruit juice or marinade instead.
- Remove the skin on chicken and turkey pieces. If you're roasting a whole chicken or turkey, remove the skin after cooking.
- Use a vegetable oil spray to brown or sauté foods.
- Make recipes or egg dishes without egg yolks. Use only egg whites or egg substitutes.
- Instead of regular cheese, use fat-free or lowfat cheeses.



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Numbers are important

Change your lifestyle, change your future

You can also improve your cholesterol by making some changes in activities, weight and lifestyle.

Activity Level

Regular exercise at moderate to high levels helps to improve LDL cholesterol, raise HDL and maintain ideal body weight. Ideally, exercise five to seven days per week for 30 minutes per day; or if you want to lose weight, exercise 60 minutes per day. Activity can be broken into short segments throughout the day. Examples of moderate Physical Activity:

- brisk walking for 30-40 minutes
- bicycling 5 miles in 30 minutes
- raking leaves for 30 minutes
- basketball for 15-20 minutes
- dancing for 30 minutes
- swimming laps for 20 minutes
- volleyball for 45 minutes
- housework – heavy cleaning
- mowing the lawn for 30 minutes
- golf – pulling a cart or carrying clubs

Weight

Excess weight can contribute to high cholesterol levels but losing just five or 10 pounds can improve it. To lose just one pound per week, eat 500 fewer calories per day *or* eat 200 fewer calories *and* exercise for one hour per day.

Alcohol

It is recommended that women limit their alcohol intake to no more than a drink per day, and men to no more than two drinks per day. A serving of alcohol is:

- 5 ounces of wine
- 12 ounces of beer
- 1½ ounces of liquor

Smoking

Smoking cigarettes contributes to low HDL. If you smoke, you should stop. The more times you try to quit, the more likely you are to succeed at quitting smoking.

EASY STEPS

Pedometers:

Pedometers are a great way to keep track of your steps. The goal is to gradually increase to 10,000 steps a day.

Eat more fruits and vegetables:

- 4 to 6 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day
- Better choices are fresh or frozen with “no added sugar”

Fish oil capsules:

This is a great way to add omega-3s to your diet. Take the capsules with meals. Make sure you are getting at least 2 grams of DHA and EPA added together. Refrigerating the capsules can help minimize the fishy taste that comes with some brands of fish oil capsules.