

ARE YOU AT RISK?

QUIKRISK™ SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

The only sure way to know whether you have high cholesterol is to have your blood levels tested, since often there are no symptoms of high cholesterol. However, this test can help you determine whether cholesterol could be a problem for you. Circle the appropriate response next to each true statement and add up your total.

	Yes	No	
<i>I'm a man 45 or older or a woman 55 or older.</i>	10 pts	0 pts	
<i>My family has a history of heart disease</i>	10 pts	0 pts	
	Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
<i>I eat foods high in saturated fat.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I eat foods high in trans fats, such as fried foods and packaged baked goods.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I eat cholesterol-rich foods such as shrimp and liver.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I avoid eating fruits, vegetables, legumes and other sources of soluble fiber.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I don't eat whole grains.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I tend to fry foods when I cook.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I drink more than one or two alcoholic beverages a day.</i>	10	5	0
<i>I tend to be sedentary (rarely exercising).</i>	10	5	0

HOW DID YOU DO?

If you scored 0-25 points, you're probably doing a good job keeping cholesterol under control.

If your total was 30-50, you're at medium risk for letting cholesterol get out of control and should discuss it with your health care provider during your next visit.

If you scored 55-75 points, you're at medium-high risk and may want to schedule some time soon to discuss cholesterol with your provider.

If you scored 80-100, you may be considered at high risk for high cholesterol and should speak with a health care professional without delay.

If you don't know your cholesterol levels: Get your cholesterol tested, no matter what your score.

Quick Tips for Cholesterol Control

- **Minimize** other heart disease risks such as diabetes and high blood pressure. **How:** Stay active, eat plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains; control your weight; take medication if prescribed; and get regular health checkups.
- **Remember** that saturated fat plays a big role in unhealthy cholesterol levels, but limiting dietary cholesterol is also important to heart health.
- **Choose** whipped or tub margarine over the stick variety. The softer a margarine is, the less trans fat it contains. **Even better:** Try the newer vegetable spreads that contain no trans fats.
- **Cook** healthy. Bake, broil, or steam instead of frying. You'll avoid adding extra fat and calories to meals.
- **Substitute** good fats for bad, but remember that any fat is high in calories — 9 calories per gram. So easy does it on fats in general.
- **Know** that Harvard researchers found that moderate egg consumption — up to one a day — does not raise the risk of heart disease in healthy individuals. Eggs are rich in nutrients that may help lower the risk for heart disease.
- **Talk** to your health care provider if you smoke. Smoking cessation medications, nicotine replacement therapy and psychotherapy have all been shown to help even hard-core smokers quit.
- **Be good to yourself.** Eat well, lower your stress, sleep well and get exercise. It's the best heart healthy strategy there is.



CONTROLLING CHOLESTEROL

AN EASY-TO-FOLLOW GUIDE



THE TRUTH ABOUT CHOLESTEROL

You know cholesterol can be bad for you. This soft, waxy fat substance can narrow arteries and restrict or block blood flow to the heart. People with high blood cholesterol have a greater chance of getting heart disease.

We also need cholesterol — it helps form cell membranes, hormones and other important substances. Your liver produces almost all the cholesterol your body needs. In some people, the body produces too much cholesterol but for the majority, dietary cholesterol and fat are the main culprits in raising cholesterol levels.

The typical American diet is high in cholesterol and fat. This brochure will tell you how to keep your cholesterol under control.



A Word About Good & Bad

Cholesterol can't dissolve in the blood, so it is carried to and from cells by packages called lipoproteins. **There are two major kinds:**

THE GOOD

- High-density lipoproteins (HDL) carry cholesterol back to the liver, where it is passed from the body. **HDL cholesterol** is good because it is thought to sweep cholesterol from the arteries. **The higher your HDL levels, the better.**

THE BAD

- Low-density lipoproteins (LDL) carry cholesterol from the liver to the rest of the body. **LDL cholesterol** is bad because it tends to build up on arterial walls and can clog arteries. **The lower your LDL levels, the better.**

Another kind of bad blood fat worth watching: **triglycerides**. High triglyceride levels are linked to heart disease and diabetes.

Am I at Risk?

Anyone can have high cholesterol levels, but certain groups are at higher risk. Taking the test on the facing panel can help you further determine your risk of high cholesterol.

STEP
1

Eat the Right Stuff

Base your diet on plant foods. Research shows that a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds helps lower total cholesterol and LDL levels better than other low-fat diets.

Get plenty of soluble fiber. It helps lower cholesterol. **Top choices:** kidney beans, Brussels sprouts, oats and skin-on apples and pears.

Load up on cholesterol-free foods.

Cholesterol is only found in food of animal origin (including fish), never in plants and legumes.

Cereals, breads, pasta and other whole-grain products contain no cholesterol.



Choose healthy oils for cooking.

Monounsaturated types such as olive or canola oil and polyunsaturated varieties such as corn or soybean oil contain little saturated fat. Plus, they may actually lower LDL and raise HDL levels.

Add fish to the menu. Many kinds of fish contain heart-healthy polyunsaturated fat (omega-3), especially salmon. But avoid shrimp, squid and limit shellfish such as lobster.

Go lean. Opt for lean cuts of meat and poultry (remove the skin), and fat-free or 1-percent milk dairy products rather than whole-milk dairy products.

STEP
2

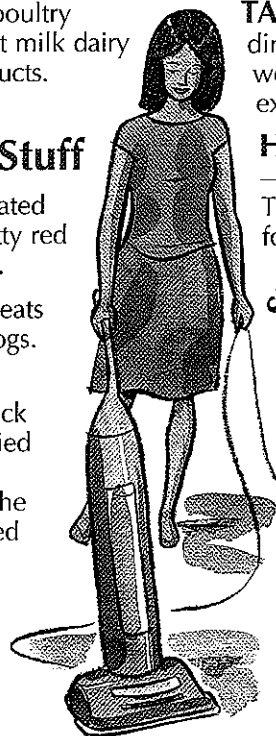
Limit the Wrong Stuff

CURB your intake of saturated fats in animal foods. Limit fatty red meats, butter, whole milk and cheeses.

GO EASY on high-fat processed meats such as bologna, sausage and hot dogs.

WATCH for trans fats, a type of fat found in processed foods such as stick margarines, vegetable shortening, fried foods and salad dressings. Trans fats raise LDL cholesterol levels. **Clue:** The ingredients will include hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils.

LIMIT packaged baked goods such as cookies, crackers and cake. They're the most likely food to contain trans fats.



STEP
3

Do the Right Things

READ nutrition

labels for cholesterol amounts.

The AHA recommends limiting your average daily cholesterol intake to less than 300 mg for the average healthy person.

MAINTAIN a healthy weight. Excess pounds raise your risk of heart disease.

DON'T smoke. Smoking cigarettes lowers HDL cholesterol levels.

TAKE any prescribed cholesterol medicines as directed, and remember that these medicines work best when coupled with cutting fat and exercising more.

HAVE your cholesterol levels checked regularly — at least every five years for healthy people. Those with high cholesterol or other risk factors for heart disease may need more frequent testing.

STEP
4

Make the Right Moves

Stay physically active. Exercise can raise healthy HDL and lower unhealthy LDL levels. Experts recommend 30 minutes of moderately intense cardio (aerobic) exercise at least 5 days a week.

Choose a time. Exercise at the same time every day to make it part of your routine.

Inject activity into everything you do. Take the stairs, walk to the store — even hide the remote and get up to change channels.

Cholesterol Levels at a Glance

	Normal/Optimal	Borderline	High
Total	Under 200	200-239	240 or above
Triglycerides	Under 150	150-199	200-499
LDL	Below 100	130-159	160 or above
HDL	Aim for 60 or above		

*Unlike total, LDL and triglyceride levels, the higher your HDL level, the better.

