



Cholesterol

High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease, which is the #1 cause of death in the U.S. Cholesterol comes from food and is also made in the liver.

There are 2 forms: good "HDL" that helps carry cholesterol back to the liver and "bad" LDL that can cause buildup in your arteries and result in heart disease. We want more HDL and less LDL.

See below for tips on improving cholesterol:

- **Eat a heart-healthy diet:** Choose healthy fats and opt for monounsaturated (olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds) and polyunsaturated fats (Omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish such as tuna, salmon or plant-based chia or flax seed). Omega-3 can help increase HDL. Limit saturated fats, which can be found in red meat, full-fat dairy products and processed foods. Increase fiber intake. Foods high in soluble fiber, such as oats, barley, fruits and vegetables, can help lower cholesterol levels.
- **Exercise regularly:** Engage in moderate aerobic exercise most days of the week. This can include brisk walking, jogging or cycling. Exercise helps raise HDL and lower LDL.
- **Quit smoking:** Smoking lowers HDL and increases the risk of heart disease.
- **Limit alcohol consumption:** If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. For most people, this means up to 1 drink a day for women and up to 2 drinks a day for men.
- **Consider medications:** If lifestyle changes are not sufficient, your doctor may prescribe medications to help manage cholesterol levels.