

High Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a type of fat (lipid) in your blood that is used for cell processes, digestion processes in the liver and hormone production.

Your body, mainly the liver, makes all of the cholesterol that is necessary for bodily functions. Therefore, a diet that contains a lot of cholesterol can cause high cholesterol levels in your body.

Good Cholesterol versus Bad Cholesterol

Cholesterol is carried through the body by proteins known as LDLs and HDLs.

- Low-density lipoproteins (LDLs):
 - Bad cholesterol
 - Can be harmful to your arteries
- High-density lipoproteins (HDLs):
 - Good cholesterol
 - Help to regulate the amount of cholesterol in your blood

Health Risks of High Cholesterol

Over time, excess LDLs can:

- Cause a buildup of plaque (a fatty material), which clogs arteries
- Decrease the size of blood vessels
- Reduce the flow of blood through blood vessels

High cholesterol can increase your risk of:

- Coronary artery disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke

How is High Cholesterol Diagnosed and Treated?

Diagnosis: If you are over the age of 20 you should have a blood test to check cholesterol levels every 5 years.

Treatment: Changing your diet and making other lifestyle changes can help lower your cholesterol level.

- Opt for lean proteins such as chicken and fish
- Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables daily
- Limit saturated fats, trans-fats, and cholesterol such as meats, dairy products and processed foods
- Exercise regularly

Your doctor may prescribe medication to assist in lowering your cholesterol.

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