

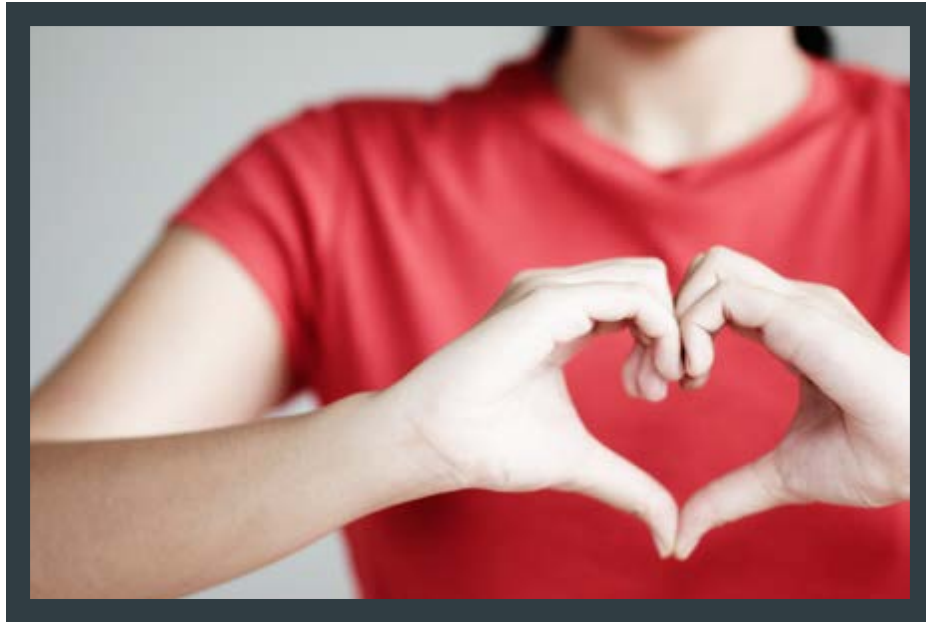
UNDERSTANDING CHOLESTEROL FOR HEART HEALTH

BLOOD CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that is found in all cells of the body. The liver produces the amount of cholesterol it needs to make hormones and digestive enzymes. Cholesterol travels through the bloodstream in small packages called lipoproteins.

LIPOPROTEINS

There are two types of lipoproteins, often referred to as “good” and “bad” cholesterol.



- **High-density lipoproteins (HDL)**, or “good” cholesterol, carry cholesterol from other parts of the body back to the liver for removal.
- **Low-density lipoproteins (LDL)**, or “bad” cholesterol, when present in high amounts, can build up in the arteries.

HDL carries LDL cholesterol away from the arteries but does not completely eliminate it. A healthy diet and exercise can help to improve cholesterol levels.

Sources:

<http://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cholesterol/hdl-good-ldl-bad-cholesterol-and-triglycerides>

UNDERSTANDING CHOLESTEROL FOR HEART HEALTH

DIETARY CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol comes from two sources. The primary source is the liver, and the secondary source is dietary.

SATURATED FATS IN MODERATION

A diet high in saturated fats such as fatty meats, butter, cheese, coconut oil and palm oil, can drive up total cholesterol and tip the balance toward more harmful LDL cholesterol. Choose lean protein sources to reduce saturated fat intake.

AVOID TRANS FATS

Eating foods rich in trans fats increases the amount of harmful LDL cholesterol in the bloodstream and reduces the amount of beneficial HDL cholesterol. Trans fats create inflammation, which is linked to heart disease. Foods that contain trans fats include deep-fried foods, pre-packaged desserts, and some frozen meals.

CHOOSE GOOD FATS

Monounsaturated fats, like extra-virgin olive oil and avocados, improve HDL levels. Polyunsaturated fats, like nuts, seeds or fish, decrease LDL levels. These good fats help to improve the overall cholesterol profile.



Sources:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/the-truth-about-fats-bad-and-good>

UNDERSTANDING CHOLESTEROL FOR HEART HEALTH THE EXERCISE-CHOLESTEROL LINK

Regular exercise can help improve cholesterol levels. Moderate intensity exercise has been shown to help in two ways.

- Exercise stimulates enzymes that help move LDL from the blood to liver. From there, cholesterol is expelled.
- Exercise increases the size of the lipoproteins that carry cholesterol through the blood. Small, dense particles can squeeze into the linings of the heart and blood vessels and are more dangerous than larger particles.

Both aerobic exercise and resistance training have been shown to benefit cholesterol levels. Choose an activity that you enjoy—this will help you to stick with it in the long run!



Sources: