



Shaklee Wellness Update

What You Need to Know About Cholesterol

There's been a lot of talk about high cholesterol over the years. Today, one in three adults in the U.S. has it. For some, it's genetic. Others get it from the foods they eat. So what exactly does it mean to have high cholesterol? What is cholesterol, anyway? And most important, what can you do to help keep your cholesterol under control?

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Cholesterol: the good, the bad, and the consequences Did you know that cholesterol is an essential part of your body that plays many important roles? It's a component of all your cell membranes and is involved in the production of Vitamin D and the hormones, estrogen and testosterone. It also helps your body metabolize the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. The cholesterol circulating in your bloodstream comes from two sources. Most of it is produced by the liver, and the rest comes from your diet. These fatty substances are transported by carrier molecules called lipoproteins. Low density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL) tends to be deposited along the artery walls, which contributes to the development of atherosclerosis, increasing the

risk for heart disease and stroke.

In contrast, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL) tends to be carried away from the bloodstream, so higher HDL levels are associated with a lower risk of heart disease and stroke. The good news is that simple diet and lifestyle changes can help you control your cholesterol levels.

Have you checked your cholesterol levels lately? Cholesterol is measured in milligrams per deciliter of blood (mg/dL). The American Heart Association has identified a total blood cholesterol level of less than 200 mg/dL as desirable, whereas anything higher than 240 mg/dL is a significantly elevated level associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. For LDL cholesterol, anything less than 100 mg/dL is desirable, while anything above 120 mg/dL increases the risk for heart disease.

Now what? If your cholesterol numbers are not where they should be, you can take steps to help lower them by following the guidelines from the National Institutes of Health, which includes reducing your intake of saturated fat and cholesterol typically found in fatty cuts of meat and fast foods. Get out and get moving! Lose extra pounds—this will have many positive benefits beyond helping to lower your cholesterol. Eat fiber-rich whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. And add 2,000 mg of clinically proven plant sterols and stanols to your diet every day. These ingredients have been clinically proven to help lower cholesterol.

Elevated total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol levels are significant risk factors for a heart attack or stroke.

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