



What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that comes from two main sources: what your body produces naturally & from the food you eat

Cholesterol is not always a bad thing. However, too much cholesterol can form thick, hard deposits (“plaque”) in the walls of the arteries that make them narrower and harder for the heart to pump blood. This condition is known as “**atherosclerosis**”. Lots of plaque build up can cause a blood clot. Blood clots can become dangerous if it is located in an artery that leads to the brain.

There are two types of cholesterol: “good” and “bad.”

Too much of one type—or not enough of another—can put you at a higher risk of developing health problems.

Bad cholesterol

When too much bad cholesterol circulates in the blood, it causes plaque build-up in the arteries, which could possibly lead to **coronary heart disease, a heart attack or stroke**. There are no negative side effects of having high cholesterol so it has to be tested by a trained health professional.

Good cholesterol

Lots of **HDL** (good) cholesterol helps your body get rid of the bad stuff and reduce your risk of developing coronary heart disease and also improves overall health.

Causes of high cholesterol

- ◆ Fat intake (cholesterol, saturated fat, trans fat)
- ◆ Being overweight
- ◆ Mental stress
- ◆ Alcohol use
- ◆ Genetic diseases (diabetes, liver or kidney diseases)

How to treat high cholesterol

Diet

Eat a lot of fruit and vegetables * (bananas, orange, avocados). Eat chicken & fish instead of beef. Do not smoke. If you drink limit it to one or two drinks and only drink on occasion.

Exercise

Try to walk at least 30 minutes a day to start. Slowly increase the amount of time and eventually add slow running. Don't be discouraged and keep track of your progress.