High Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a soft, waxy substance found in the bloodstream and in all your body's cells. It is an important part of a healthy body because it is used to form cell membranes, some hormones, and is needed for other functions. But having too much cholesterol in the blood is a major risk factor for heart disease.

There are two types of cholesterol: Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL) and High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL).

LDL CHOLESTEROL

LDL cholesterol can build up on the walls of your arteries and increase your chances of getting heart disease. That is why LDL cholesterol is referred to as "bad" cholesterol. The lower your LDL cholesterol number, the better it is for your health. The table below explains what the numbers mean.

LDL Cholesterol	LDL-Cholesterol Category
Less than 100	Very good
100 - 129	Good
130 - 159	Borderline high
160 - 189	High
190 and above	Very high

HDL CHOLESTEROL

When it comes to HDL cholesterol, the "good" cholesterol, the higher the number the better it is for your health. This is because HDL cholesterol protects against heart disease by taking the "bad" cholesterol out of your blood and keeping it from building up in your arteries. The table below explains what the numbers mean.

HDL Cholesterol	HDL-Cholesterol Category
60 and above	Very good; helps to lower risk of heart disease
Less than 40 in men and less than 50 in women	Low; considered a risk factor for heart disease

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL

Your total blood cholesterol is a measure of LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, and other lipid components. Doctors recommend total cholesterol levels below 200.

Total Cholesterol	Category
Less than 200	Normal
200 - 239	Borderline high
240 and above	High

High Cholesterol (continued)

PREVENTING AND CONTROLLING HIGH CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol comes from two sources: your body and food. Your body produces about 75 percent of the cholesterol in your blood and the other 25 percent comes from the foods you eat. Here are a few things you can do to help control your cholesterol levels:

- Eat a heart healthy diet – plenty of fruits and vegetables, nuts, fish, and whole-grains. Remember to limit the amount of saturated fat you eat, and avoid trans fats.

- Be physically active—be active at least 30 minutes a day and your heart will thank you! Just 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week will keep your heart in tip-top shape.

This information was adapted from guidelines developed by the American Heart Association. For more information about cholesterol, visit www.americanheart.org.

Information provided on high cholesterol is for general knowledge only and is not intended to provide personal medical advice or substitute for the advice of your physician. Always consult with your physician or healthcare provider if you think you may have high cholesterol.

For more information about fruits, vegetables, and physical activity, visit us at www.cachampionsforchange.net or call 1-888-328-3483.
Funded by the USDA's Food Stamp Program, an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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