

## Ways to keep your cholesterol normal



**Eat a healthy diet** with a range of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts, lean poultry, and fish; and limit foods high in saturated fat. Visit: [myeatsmartmovemore.com](http://myeatsmartmovemore.com)



**Be physically active.** Get regular physical activity. Visit: [myeatsmartmovemore.com](http://myeatsmartmovemore.com)



**Reduce your alcohol intake.** Excessive alcohol intake can increase cholesterol, which can lead to heart attack or stroke.



**Control your weight.** Watch body fat. Visit: [esmmweighless.com](http://esmmweighless.com)



**Quit smoking.** If you smoke or use any form of tobacco, quit. Visit [quitlinenc.com](http://quitlinenc.com) or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).



**Get a lipid profile test.** Have your cholesterol checked as required by your doctor or at least every 5 years if you are 20 years of age and over.



**Take cholesterol medications** as recommended by the doctor.

**Control your cholesterol for a healthy heart.**



### References:

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics. *Vital Statistics, 2018–Volume 2*, January 2020. [schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/vital/lcd/2018/pdf/TblsA-F\\_rev4.pdf](https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/vital/lcd/2018/pdf/TblsA-F_rev4.pdf)

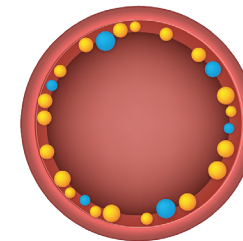
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National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (2018). *Blood Cholesterol*. Accessed at [nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/blood-cholesterol](https://nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/blood-cholesterol) on March 28, 2021

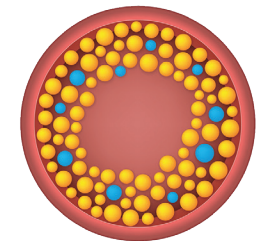
**Heart Disease is the 2nd leading cause of death in North Carolina.**

## GET TO KNOW

# Your Cholesterol



Healthy Artery



Unhealthy Artery

## What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance made by your liver. Your body needs it to build cells and to make vitamins and hormones. Cholesterol is found in foods such as meat, eggs, and dairy products. Unhealthy levels of cholesterol in your body can clog your arteries which increases your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

**Start With Your Heart®**

## Risk Factors for High Cholesterol



**Age.** Increased cholesterol is common in people between 40 and 59.



**Family history and genetics.** High cholesterol is common among close relatives.



**Gender.** Men between ages 20 and 39 have an increased risk for bad cholesterol. Women develop higher levels of bad cholesterol at later ages than men.



**Race or ethnicity.** Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans are likely to have lower levels of good cholesterol than other groups.

## Lifestyle Risk Factors



**Unhealthy diet**



**Overweight**



**Physical inactivity**



**Tobacco smoking**

## Bad Cholesterol vs. Good Cholesterol

Cholesterol circulates in the blood on proteins called **lipoproteins**. There are **two types** of lipoproteins that carry cholesterol throughout your body.



**LDL** (Low Density Lipoprotein) or bad cholesterol carries cholesterol to tissues. High levels of LDL can cause plaque build-up in your arteries. This can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Lower LDL levels are better for your heart health.



**HDL** (High Density Lipoprotein) or good cholesterol carries cholesterol away from body tissues to the liver. The liver then filters cholesterol from the body, preventing clogging of the arteries. Higher HDL levels mean a lower risk for heart disease and stroke.



**Triglycerides** are a different type of fat in the body that circulate in your blood. These fats come from foods you eat and from unused calories. Triglycerides also provide energy. High levels of triglycerides increase risks for stroke and heart disease.

## Good Cholesterol Levels

**LDL (Bad cholesterol):**  
Less than 100mg/dL

**HDL (Good cholesterol):**  
60mg/dL and above

**Total Cholesterol:**  
Less than 200mg/dL

**Triglycerides:**  
Less than 150mg/dL