



American Heart Association.



Life's Essential 8TM for Women

BE A CHOLESTEROL CONTROL FREAK

The Good and the Bad of Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that comes from two sources: **food** and the **body**. It is found in foods from animal sources only. It travels in the body by lipoproteins (LDL and HDL). Too much bad cholesterol can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.

- » **HDL = GOOD:** High-density lipoprotein is known as "good" cholesterol.
- » **LDL = BAD:** Low-density lipoprotein is known as "bad" cholesterol.
- » **HDL:** Helps keep LDL from sticking to artery walls and reduces plaque buildup. This process can lower the risk of heart disease and stroke.
- » **Triglycerides:** The most common type of fat in the body.
- » **Total Cholesterol:** HDL level + LDL level + 1/5th of triglyceride level = **total cholesterol level**.

Know Your Numbers

Work with a health care professional who can measure your blood cholesterol and help you understand what the levels mean. Track your cholesterol levels over time and take steps to reduce high cholesterol to protect your heart.



SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

Remember these tips to help you stay on track with your cholesterol level goals.

» EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, and lean animal proteins like fish and seafood. Limit sugary foods and drinks, red or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods.

» MOVE MORE

Sit less and move more. Physical activity helps improve cholesterol levels.

» GET THE FACTS ON FATS

The fats you eat can affect your cholesterol levels. Replace saturated fats like meats, butter, cream, cheese and some baked and fried foods with unsaturated fats like fish, vegetable oils, nuts, and avocados.

» DON'T BE TOXIC

Smoking and vaping lowers good HDL cholesterol. It also raises your risk of heart disease.

» MAINTAIN YOUR MEDS

Your doctor may prescribe statins or other medications to control your cholesterol levels.

GO RED TOGETHER

Help other women in your life control their cholesterol. Remind your friends to schedule a doctor's appointment if it's been a while and get their cholesterol levels checked.

Learn more at goredforwomen.org/lifes8women

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