



#42 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

Control Your Cholesterol: Keep Your Heart Healthy



- High cholesterol is a *preventable* and *treatable* cause of heart disease and stroke.
- 1 in 4 adult New Yorkers has high cholesterol, but many don't know it.
- High cholesterol has no symptoms. The only way to know you have it is to get checked by your doctor.
- It won't go away on its own. High cholesterol *stays* high unless you take action – and keep taking action.
- Physical activity, healthy diet, and healthy weight can prevent and reduce high cholesterol.
- Cholesterol-lowering medications are safe and effective.



• Available in Spanish and Chinese: call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health
 • Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite nyc.gov/health
 • 需要中文服務 - 可電 311 或造訪網址: nyc.gov/health

“Good” and “Bad” Cholesterol

There are two main types of cholesterol.

LDL – “bad” cholesterol

LDL (low-density lipoprotein) can clog arteries, increasing the risk of heart disease. Keep it **L**ow.

HDL – “good” cholesterol

HDL (high-density lipoprotein) keeps arteries clear, reducing the risk of heart disease. Keep it **H**igh.

- *Triglycerides* (a type of fat) can also clog arteries.

High Cholesterol Can Kill You

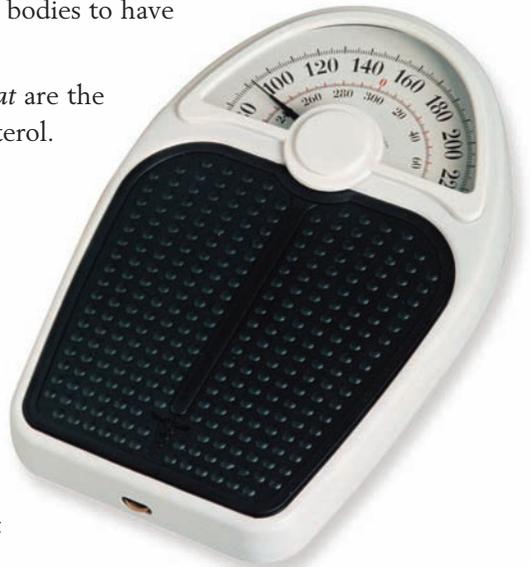


Over time, high cholesterol thickens artery walls and clogs arteries, leading to:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Angina
- Poor circulation
- Death at an early age

Diet, Weight, and Genetics Can Make Cholesterol Rise

- People who are overweight or obese are more likely to have high cholesterol, but anyone can have it, including thin people and even children.
- Some people’s genetics cause their bodies to have high cholesterol.
- Food with *saturated fat* and *trans fat* are the main dietary causes of high cholesterol.
- Cholesterol in food can also raise your blood cholesterol, but not as much as saturated fat. Products that say “cholesterol-free” may still contain saturated or trans fat.



Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight may raise bad (LDL) cholesterol.

Cholesterol Levels

Total cholesterol (lower is better)

- Ideal – Below 200
- Borderline High – 200 to 239
- High – 240 and above

“Bad” LDL cholesterol (keep it Low)

- Ideal – Below 100
- Above Ideal – 100 to 129
(BUT – Above 100 is “High” for people with heart disease or diabetes)
- Borderline High – 130 to 159
- High – 160 and above

“Good” HDL cholesterol (keep it High)

- Ideal – 60 and above
- Low – Below 40

Triglycerides (lower is better)

- Ideal – Below 150
- Borderline High – 150 to 199
- High – 200 and above

Know Your Numbers

- Men 35 and older and women 45 and older should have regular blood tests for high cholesterol.
- You may need to be tested earlier and more often if:
 - You have already had a heart attack or stroke.
 - You have other risk factors (diabetes, high blood pressure, a family history of early heart disease, are overweight, or smoke).
- Ask your doctor how often you should be tested and what cholesterol levels are healthy for you.

You Can Control Cholesterol

To keep bad (LDL) cholesterol low and good (HDL) cholesterol high:

Exercise. Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as a brisk walk) at least 5 days a week. Exercise can raise good (HDL) cholesterol.

Eat a healthy diet.

- Eat at least 5 servings of fruits or vegetables a day. Add fiber to your diet.
- Limit saturated fat and high-cholesterol foods.
- Avoid all trans fat. (Don’t eat foods with *partially hydrogenated* vegetable oils on their labels.)
- Choose foods with healthy *monounsaturated* or *polyunsaturated* oils.
- When eating out, ask about the oils used to cook your food. Choose items from the menu that are low in saturated fat and free of trans fat.
- See **A Healthy Diet Helps Control Cholesterol** for details.



Check labels before you buy.

- Look for the **Nutrition Facts** panel.
- Choose foods with the lowest “% Daily Value” of saturated fat and cholesterol per serving — no more than 20%.
 - The product on the right has 25% Daily Value of saturated fat per serving – *that’s too much*.
 - It has 10% Daily Value of cholesterol per serving – *that’s okay*.
- Choose foods with 0 grams (NO) trans fat. This product has 2 grams per serving – *don’t buy it!*
- To help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol, choose foods high in fiber – more than 20% Daily Value per serving.

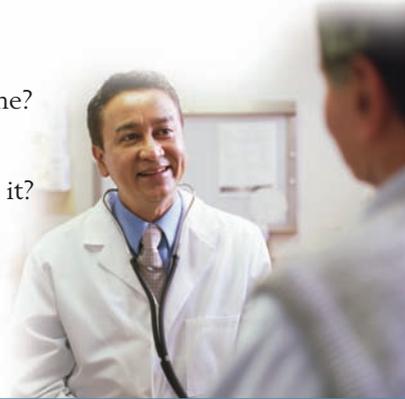
Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 260	Calories from Fat 120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Trans Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 660mg	28%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15%	Iron 4%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
Calories:	2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrate 4 Protein 4

If you smoke, quit now. Smoking lowers good (HDL) cholesterol. For free help, call 311 and ask for the Smokers’ Quitline.

Medications. When diet and exercise aren’t enough, cholesterol-lowering medicines are safe and effective. REMEMBER, if you are prescribed medication, it only protects your heart if you take it!

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- What are my cholesterol levels?
- Are these levels ideal for me?
- What diet and lifestyle changes are right for me?
- *If you are prescribed a medication, always ask:*
 - How long and how often will I need to take it?
 - Are there any side effects?
 - Is a less expensive “generic” form available?



More Information

- **NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Program:** nyc.gov/heart or call 311 and ask for Cholesterol
- **American Heart Association:** www.americanheart.org/cholesterol or 1-800-AHA-USA-1 (1-800-242-8721)
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** www.cdc.gov/cvh
- **National Institutes of Health:** www.nhlbi.nih.gov/chd
- **American Academy of Physicians:** www.familydoctor.org/029.xml
- **MedicineNet:** www.medicinenet.com/cholesterol/article.htm



For copies of any Health Bulletin

All Health Bulletins are also available at nyc.gov/health

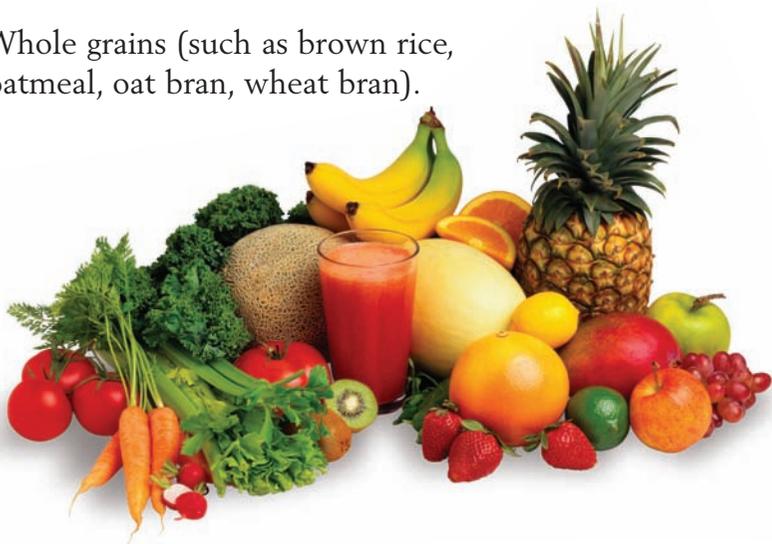
Visit nyc.gov/health/e-mail for a free e-mail subscription

For a postal subscription, e-mail your name and address to healthcml@health.nyc.gov

A Healthy Diet Helps Control Cholesterol

Choose Foods From These Groups...

- Skinless poultry, fish, and lean cuts of meat.
- Fat-free or 1% dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese).
- Trans-fat-free *monounsaturated* or *polyunsaturated* vegetable oils and spreads (such as olive, canola, corn, cottonseed, peanut, safflower, soybean, sunflower).
- Egg whites and egg substitutes.
- Fiber-rich foods:
 - Whole fruits (such as apples, bananas, berries, nectarines, oranges, peaches, pears, plums, prunes).
 - Vegetables (such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, carrots, celery, cucumbers, tomatoes).
 - Legumes (peas, beans, lentils).
 - Nuts and seeds.
 - Whole grains (such as brown rice, oatmeal, oat bran, wheat bran).



Limit or Avoid These Foods...

- Fatty cuts of beef and pork.
- Deli meats (such as salami, sausage, pepperoni).
- Organ meats (such as brain, liver, kidneys) – they are high in cholesterol.
- Shrimp and lobster (moderately high in cholesterol).
- High-fat dairy products (whole milk, butter, cream, half-and-half, cheese, yogurt).
- Whole eggs including those in baked goods and processed foods. Yolks are high in cholesterol (egg *whites* are okay).
- Processed or store-bought foods that contain saturated or trans fat (check the **Nutrition Facts** label).

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 8



Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#42 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

125 Worth Street, Room 342, CN 33
New York, N.Y. 10013

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

Bureau of Communications

Cortnie Lowe, M.F.A., Executive Editor
Drew Blakeman
Kenneth Lo

Prepared in cooperation with:

Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Control
Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Control Program



**Control Your Cholesterol:
Keep Your Heart Healthy**

**DIAL
311**

**For Non-Emergency NYC Services
Telephone Interpretation in 170 Languages**