



Cholesterol (Blood Fats)

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What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy substance made by your liver and (to a lesser extent) from the foods you eat. It comes in two main types: low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and high-density lipoprotein (HDL).



Why is it significant?

The body needs a certain amount of cholesterol to function. However, too much LDL (“bad” cholesterol) or too little HDL (“good” cholesterol) will create clogging in your arteries, reducing blood flow. This can lead to heart disease, heart attacks, strokes and circulation problems. An individual’s target cholesterol values will depend on their age, family history, smoking status and medical condition.

What else should I be aware of?

While diet and exercise alone are often effective in reducing high cholesterol, you may require prescription medications (usually statins) if you have coronary artery disease, peripheral arterial disease or diabetes, or have had a heart attack or stroke.



What can I do?

- ✓ Avoid foods high in saturated fats (fats from animal products, such as red meat and dairy products) and trans fats (fats in margarines, fast foods and commercially baked goods: these are especially unhealthy). You can see how much saturated and trans fats a food contains by reading its nutritional label.
- ✓ Use only non-hydrogenated fats and oils like olive oil. Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits, preferably raw

or lightly cooked, and other foods high in fibre.



- ✓ Choose more plant-based protein, such as nuts, seeds and soy, instead of meat.
- ✓ Engage in 30-60 minutes of physical activity daily.
- ✓ Maintain a healthy body weight.
- ✓ Contact the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada at www.heartandstroke.ca or 1-888-473-4636.
- ✓ Learn more about cholesterol by going to www.makinghealthhappen.com.



Go to MakingHealthHappen.com and enter **hw115432** in the search box to learn more about Cholesterol.