

# The Take Control Two-Step

## Small Steps to Manage Chronic Diseases

# Managing High Cholesterol Resources

### Online resources

[www.acchd.us](http://www.acchd.us)

[www.longlivetexans.com](http://www.longlivetexans.com)

[www.heart360.org/](http://www.heart360.org/)

[www.medicinenet.com/cholesterol/focus.htm](http://www.medicinenet.com/cholesterol/focus.htm)

[www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/Cholesterol\\_UCM\\_001089\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/Cholesterol_UCM_001089_SubHomePage.jsp)

### Interactive Tutorial for Managing Cholesterol

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/managingcholesterol/htm/index.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/managingcholesterol/htm/index.htm)

**ANSWERS by heart** Lifestyle + Risk Reduction Cholesterol American Heart Association

### What Are High Blood Cholesterol and Triglycerides?

Cholesterol travels to the body's cells through the bloodstream by way of lipoproteins (LDL and HDL).  
LDL deposits cholesterol in the artery walls, forming plaque.  
HDL removes cholesterol from the arteries and from the bloodstream.

Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like substance found in the bloodstream and in all your body's cells. Your body makes all the cholesterol it needs. The saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol you eat may raise your blood cholesterol level. Having too much cholesterol in your blood may lead to increased risk for heart disease and stroke.

**What's so bad about high blood cholesterol?**  
Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol is often called "the bad kind." When you have too much LDL cholesterol in your blood, it can join with fats and other substances to build up in the inner walls of your arteries. The arteries can become clogged and narrow, and blood flow is reduced. If this buildup of plaque ruptures, a blood clot may form at this location or a piece may break off and travel in the bloodstream. If a blood clot blocks the blood flow to your heart, it causes a heart attack. If a blood clot blocks an artery leading to or in the brain, a stroke results.

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol is called the "good kind." It carries harmful cholesterol away from the arteries and helps protect you from heart attack and stroke. It's better to have a lot of HDL cholesterol in your blood.

**How can I lower the bad cholesterol in my blood?**  
• Cut down on foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol. These include fatty meats, organ meats such as liver, shellfish, cheese, whole-milk dairy products, egg yolks, and solid fats such as butter.

**What are triglycerides?**  
Triglycerides are the most common type of fat in your body. They come from food, and your body also makes them. High levels of blood triglycerides are often found in people who have high cholesterol levels, heart problems, are overweight or have diabetes.

• Do moderate intensity physical activities, such as brisk walking, at least 30 minutes on most or all days for a total of at least 150 minutes each week.  
• Eat more foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and high in fiber. Aim for about 25 grams of fiber each day. Be sure to include a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and grain products, beans, peas and legumes, fat-free and low-fat milk products, lean meats and poultry without skin, fatty fish, and nuts and seeds in limited amounts.  
• Lose weight if you need to and maintain a healthy weight.  
• If you can't control your cholesterol through lifestyle changes, ask your doctor about medicines that can reduce cholesterol.

(continued)

### Download more information

[www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/CholesterolToolsResources/Downloadable-Documents-for-Cholesterol\\_UCM\\_305648\\_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/CholesterolToolsResources/Downloadable-Documents-for-Cholesterol_UCM_305648_Article.jsp)