

OPERATION

★ Live Well ★



Live Well Healthy Living Tips

CHOLESTEROL EDUCATION

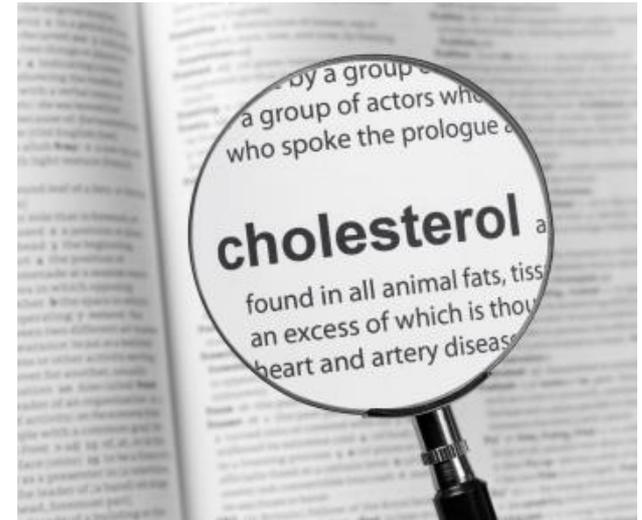
- Thyroid
- Potassium
- Holter Monitor
- Protime
- Cholestrol
- Triglyceride
- cholesterol



WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that's found in all cells of the body.

Cholesterol travels through our bloodstream in small packages called lipoproteins (lip-o-PRO-teins). These packages are made of fat (lipid) on the inside and proteins on the outside.



GOOD VS BAD CHOLESTEROL

Two kinds of lipoproteins carry cholesterol throughout your body: **low-density lipoproteins (LDL)** and **high-density lipoproteins (HDL)**. Having healthy levels of both types of lipoproteins is important.

HDL cholesterol is sometimes called “good” cholesterol. This is because it carries cholesterol from other parts of the body back to the liver. Your liver removes the cholesterol from your body.

LDL cholesterol is sometimes called “bad” cholesterol. A high **LDL** level leads to a buildup of cholesterol in your arteries. Arteries are blood vessels that carry oxygen-rich blood from your heart to the rest of your body.

HIGH BLOOD CHOLESTEROL

When you have too much cholesterol in your blood, it can build up on the walls of your arteries. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about one in every six adult Americans has high cholesterol. People who have high blood cholesterol have a greater chance of getting **coronary heart disease**, also called coronary artery disease.

Coronary heart disease is a condition in which plaque (plak) builds up inside the coronary (heart) arteries. Lowering your cholesterol may slow, reduce or even stop the buildup of plaque in your arteries.

CAUSES OF HIGH CHOLESTEROL

Your body makes all the cholesterol it needs, however, cholesterol is also found in some of the foods we eat. Foods that come from animal sources, such as egg yolks, meat, and cheese contain cholesterol. Some foods also have fats that raise cholesterol levels.



CAUSES OF HIGH CHOLESTEROL

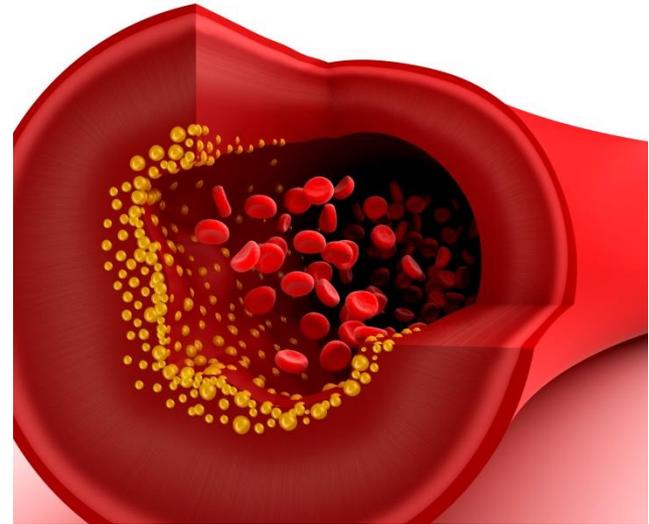
Saturated fat raises your **LDL** cholesterol level more than anything else in your diet. Saturated fat is found in some meats, dairy products, chocolate, baked goods, and deep-fried and processed foods.

Heredity, diet, age, sex, weight and how much physical activity you get are some factors that affect your cholesterol levels. For example, if you are overweight, losing weight may lower your **LDL** while exercising regularly may raise your **HDL** level.

SYMPTOMS OF HIGH CHOLESTEROL

High blood cholesterol usually has no signs or symptoms - many people don't know that their cholesterol levels are too high.

Talk with your doctor about how often you should be tested, especially if high cholesterol runs in your family.



DIAGNOSING HIGH CHOLESTEROL

Your doctor will diagnose high blood cholesterol by checking the cholesterol levels in your blood. A blood test called a lipoprotein panel can measure your cholesterol levels. The lipoprotein panel will give your doctor information about your:

- Total cholesterol
- LDL cholesterol
- HDL cholesterol
- Triglycerides*

**Triglycerides are another type of fat found in your blood.*

After reviewing your lipid panel, your provider will determine if treatment is necessary.

CORONARY HEART DISEASE

TRICARE covers age specific, periodic lipid panels as recommended by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. The current recommendation is once every five years in adults age 20 and over.

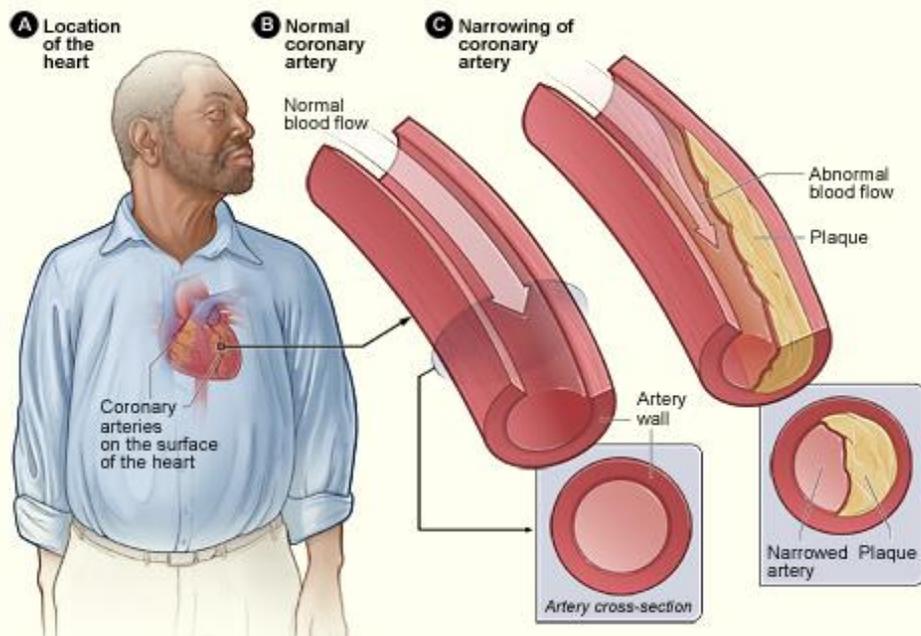


Image courtesy of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health

CORONARY HEART DISEASE

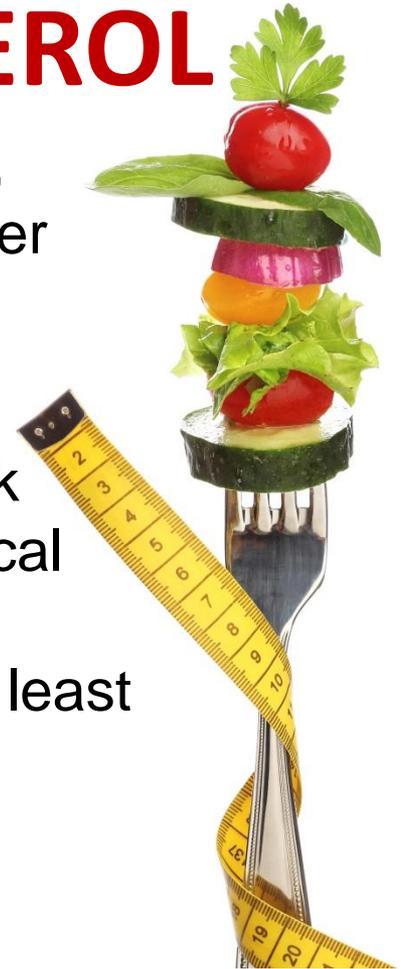
Eventually, an area of plaque can rupture (break open). This causes a blood clot to form on the surface of the plaque. If the clot becomes large enough, it can mostly or completely block blood flow through a coronary artery that feeds the heart.

A heart attack occurs if the flow of oxygen-rich blood to a section of heart muscle is cut off. If blood flow isn't restored quickly, the section of heart muscle begins to die. Without quick treatment, a heart attack can lead to serious problems or death.

PREVENTING & TREATING HIGH CHOLESTEROL

If you are diagnosed with high cholesterol, there are several things you can do to lower your cholesterol:

1. Eat a heart-healthy diet
2. Enjoy at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity
3. Strengthen muscles with training at least two days a week
4. Avoid tobacco smoke
5. Take a prescription medication



RESOURCES

The American Heart Association offers an [animation](#) about cholesterol to increase understanding of cholesterol and coronary artery disease.

The CDC offers an [informational feature](#) that describes cholesterol as well as learning what you can do if you have high blood cholesterol.

The NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) has a [10-Year Risk Calculator](#) to help you determine your chance of having a heart attack in the next 10 years.

[Operation Live Well](#) – The Military Health System’s campaign focused on leading a physically, mentally, socially and spiritually healthy lifestyle throughout the military community.

[TRICARE’s Live Well](#) healthy living section of TRICARE.mil offers beneficiaries tips and information on how to live a well balanced life.

