

## > Cholesterol

# The real deal on cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy substance made in the liver and found in the body. The liver makes all the cholesterol the body needs to function right – you need a certain amount of cholesterol to be healthy.

High cholesterol can be caused by family history and lifestyle – this includes diet and exercise.

### Bad cholesterol vs. good cholesterol

LDL cholesterol is “bad.” It is sticky and often builds up in the blood vessels, like plaque on teeth. High LDL cholesterol can lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. HDL cholesterol is “good.” It carries LDL cholesterol out of the blood stream. A high level of HDL cholesterol is good for your health.

### How does food affect my cholesterol?

Saturated fats raise cholesterol levels the most. This includes foods like butter, cheese, and fatty beef. While there is cholesterol in foods that come from animals, this doesn't affect your cholesterol level as much as dietary fat does.

### Treating high cholesterol

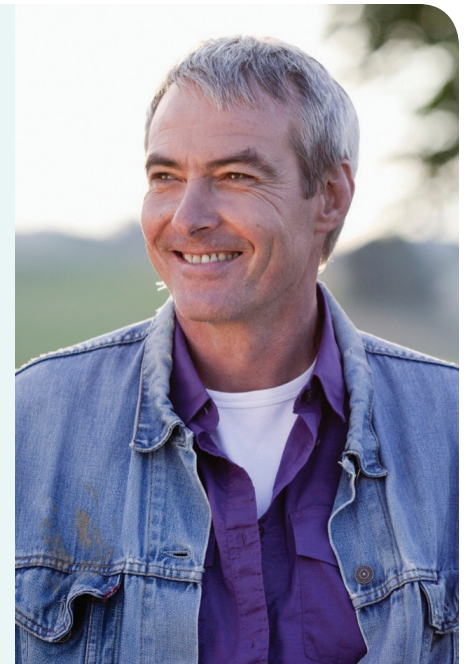
Making healthy eating changes can help lower LDL cholesterol. Increasing physical activity can help increase HDL cholesterol. Your doctor may also recommend medication to lower cholesterol. Reducing cholesterol is the key to lowering your risk for heart disease, heart attack and stroke.

### Heart healthy eating

- > Choose plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- > Use nonfat or low-fat dairy products.
- > Buy meat that is extra lean.
- > Choose fish or remove the skin from chicken or turkey.
- > Use egg substitutes or only the egg whites.
- > Use olive or canola oil.

### Physical activity changes

- > First, talk to your doctor before changing your activity level.
- > Slowly increase how much exercise you get.
- > Think about include walking, water exercise, or group exercise classes. It's important to find an exercise you enjoy to make a long term change.



### Questions?

Please call 877-277-7281 or email [careprograms@modahealth.com](mailto:careprograms@modahealth.com). TTY users, dial 711.

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