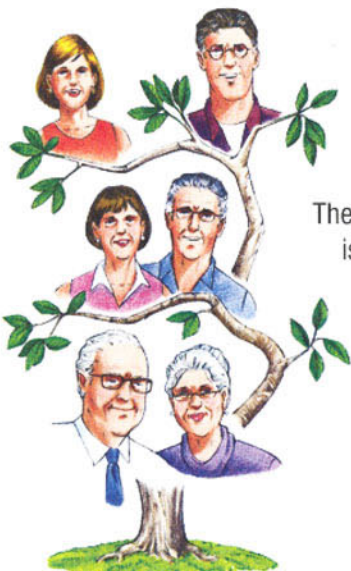


# Understanding Cholesterol

1 source is food



The 2nd source  
is heredity

## Did you know that cholesterol comes from 2 sources?

You probably know that cholesterol comes from food. But what you might not know is that your bad cholesterol also has a lot to do with your family history.

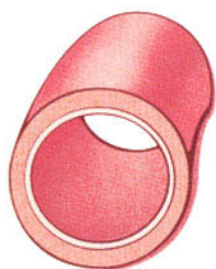
Everyone's bad cholesterol comes from 2 sources: the cholesterol that is absorbed from food and the cholesterol your body produces naturally, based on heredity.

## What is cholesterol?

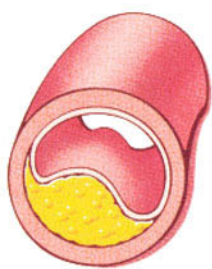
Cholesterol is a soft, waxy substance that can build up in your artery walls. This restricts blood flow and can cause a heart attack or stroke. The higher your LDL (bad) cholesterol number, the greater your chances for heart disease.

## Know your LDL (bad) cholesterol number.

Your LDL (bad) cholesterol number is important. It gives you and your doctor a standard for good health—much like your temperature, pulse, or blood pressure. Your LDL (bad) cholesterol goal number is based on your current and historical medical situation and any risk factors you may have for heart disease. The average person should try to maintain an LDL (bad) cholesterol level below 130 mg/dL. If you have heart disease or diabetes, your goal should be less than 100 mg/dL. If you don't know what your individual LDL (bad) cholesterol goal should be, ask your doctor.



Normal coronary artery



Coronary artery  
with plaque buildup

**Ask your doctor for your LDL cholesterol goal, then fill out this chart to help you keep track.**

My LDL (bad) cholesterol goal is \_\_\_\_\_

| Date              |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------|--|--|--|--|
| LDL Cholesterol   |  |  |  |  |
| Total Cholesterol |  |  |  |  |

# Lowering Cholesterol

| If you usually eat:                        | Try:  |
|--|---|
| Steak                                      | Fish  |
| Hamburgers                                 | Turkey Burgers  |
| Fried Chicken                              | Broiled or Baked Seasoned Chicken                         |
| Whole Milk or 2% Milk Cheese or Sour Cream | Skim Milk or 1% Milk Low-Fat Cheese or Low-Fat Sour Cream |
| Sauces Over Vegetables                     | Steamed Vegetables  |
| Potato Chips                               | Rice Cakes  |
| Pastries                                   | Fat-Free Pastries   |
| Sweets/Chocolate                           | Fat-Free Sweets/Chocolate                                 |

## There may be more you can do.

Stay focused on lower-fat and lower-cholesterol foods. Many people have difficulty with high cholesterol simply because their body produces too much of it. But foods that are high in cholesterol or fats also contribute to the problem.

Eat healthy when you're out. Try oil-and-vinegar dressing on salads; ask the chef to remove excess fat from beef and to trim the skin from chicken. If in doubt, ask your waiter for recommendations on foods that are low in fat.

## Make exercise a regular part of your life.

The principle of adjusting your diet also applies to exercise. To help you develop a healthy lifestyle, we've included a few tips that can help you get started (see the list below). When you're ready, remember that it's important to increase your activities gradually. Be sure to talk with your doctor before starting any exercise regimen.

| Inactive   | Mildly Active  | Active  |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk on your lunch hour or coffee break</li> <li>• Take the stairs whenever possible</li> <li>• Take the dog for an extra walk or two</li> <li>• Recruit an exercise partner</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a gym or recruit an exercise partner</li> <li>• Increase the frequency of your exercise sessions</li> <li>• Create an exercise schedule—and stick to it</li> <li>• Explore new sports that interest you</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise at least 3 times a week, 30 minutes a day</li> <li>• Choose activities that use the large muscle groups, such as swimming and biking</li> <li>• Vary your routine to avoid burnout</li> </ul> |

Factors that put you at a higher risk include:

- > High blood pressure
- > Smoking
- > A family history of heart disease
- > Being male
- > Diabetes
- > Obesity

| Risk       | Total Cholesterol | LDL     | HDL |
|------------|-------------------|---------|-----|
| High       | >239              | >159    | <35 |
| Borderline | 200-239           | 130-159 | na  |
| Desirable  | <200              | <130    | >60 |

Note: If cholesterol levels place you in borderline group and you have two or more risk factors, you're actually at high risk for heart disease.