




# Tips and Resources

# Cholesterol

**Cholesterol** is a waxy, fat-like substance found in your body.

Elevated cholesterol levels can be harmful to your heart. Your body naturally produces enough cholesterol for good health. However, consuming foods rich in saturated and trans fats can result in an overproduction of cholesterol. Cholesterol comes in two types: HDL, the good kind that helps clear away fat, and LDL, the bad kind that can clog arteries like rust in a pipe. Additionally, having high triglycerides, another type of fat in your blood, increases the risk of heart disease. 

## How can I manage elevated cholesterol levels?

### Take your medicines as directed



- Always ask your health care team questions.
- Never stop taking your medicine without first talking to your doctor.

### Make healthy lifestyle changes



- Choose foods lower in saturated and trans fats.
- Maintain healthy weight.

### Work with your health care team



- Discuss your treatment plan regularly.
- Bring a list of questions to your appointments.

## Keep a regular check on your cholesterol levels

You may need to have your cholesterol levels tested at least once every 4 to 6 years if you do not have heart disease. Some people need to get their cholesterol checked more often or less often. Talk with your health care team about the timeline that is best for you.

For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol>



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High cholesterol is commonly managed through a combination of adjusting lifestyle factors, maintaining a **healthy diet**, and taking **cholesterol-lowering medicines** prescribed by a doctor. To maintain a healthy diet, start by making a few changes at a time and add nutritious products into your meals.

## Eat **more** of these foods:

- Fat-free milk, cheese, yogurt
- Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Turkey and chicken without skin
- Lean cuts of meat
- Fish
- Beans and lentils
- Nuts and seeds
- Canola oil, olive oil or soft tub margarine instead of butter or stick margarine
- Baked, grilled, steamed, or boiled foods



## Cut **back** on these foods:

- Whole milk, full-fat cheese, and ice cream
- Fatty cuts of meat
- Meat with skin
- Sausage, hotdogs, bacon, hamburger and bologna
- Egg yolks
- Cookies and cakes
- Chips and crackers
- Deep or pan-fried foods
- Liver, kidney, and other organ meats



## Watch out for the "Bad Fat Duo"

**SATURATED** and **TRANS** fats

- Avoid saturated and trans fats, as they significantly raise cholesterol levels. Check food labels to identify their presence.
- Saturated fats are present in high-fat meat, cheese, milk, and butter.
- Trans fats are found in vegetable shortening, stick margarine, fried foods, and baked goods like cookies, crackers, pies, and pastries.