

Do You Know Your Cholesterol Levels?

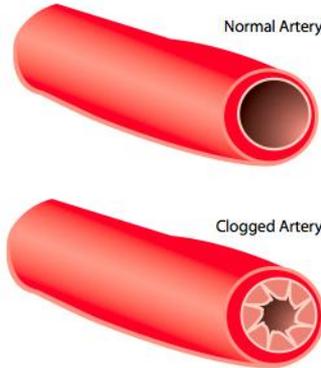
What is cholesterol?

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

Why is high blood cholesterol bad for your heart?

Your body makes all the cholesterol you need to be healthy. When you eat foods high in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol, your body can make too much cholesterol.

Over time, this extra cholesterol can clog your arteries. This increases your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.



Have your blood cholesterol checked.

The blood test to measure the cholesterol levels is called a lipid profile. You can have this test done at your doctor's office. If you are 20 years of age or older, check your cholesterol at least every 5 years. Your doctor may test you more often if your cholesterol levels are high.



What is good and bad cholesterol?

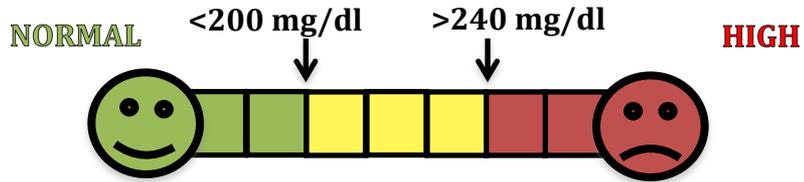
HDL is "good cholesterol." It helps clean fat and cholesterol from your blood vessels. Just remember the **H** in HDL is for **H**ealthy, and the **H**igher it is, the better.

LDL is "bad cholesterol." It carries cholesterol to your blood vessels, clogging them like rust in a pipe. Remember the **L** in LDL for **L**ousy, and the **L**ower it is, the better.

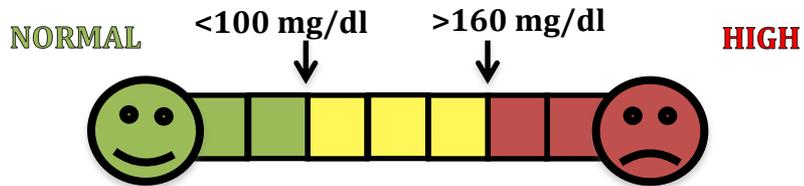
What are triglycerides?

Triglycerides are another type of fat found in the blood. When your triglycerides are high, it can raise your risk for heart disease. They come from fatty foods, alcohol and diets high in carbohydrates.

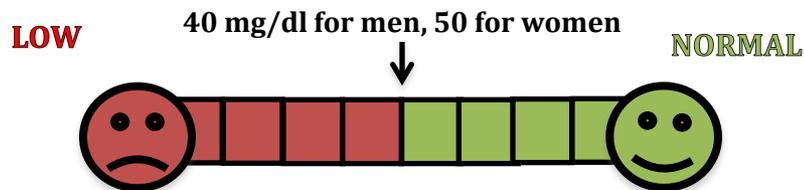
Total Cholesterol



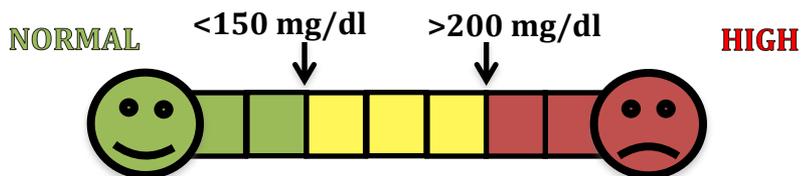
LDL or "Bad" Cholesterol



HDL or "Good" Cholesterol



Triglycerides



Start eating heart healthy foods by making a few changes at a time.

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.
- Liver, kidney, and other organ meats.
- Egg yolks.
- Cookies and cakes.
- Chips and crackers.
- Deep or pan-fried foods.



Watch out for the "Bad Fat Duo":

Saturated fat and *trans* fat.

- Saturated fat and *trans* fat are fats that raise blood cholesterol levels the most. Stay away from them. Know where they hide. Read the food label.
- Saturated fat is found in foods such as high-fat meat, cheese, milk, and butter.
- *Trans* fat is found in foods such as vegetable shortening, stick margarine, fried foods, and baked products like cookies, crackers, pies, and pastries.