



## September is National Cholesterol Education Month

Cholesterol is a fat (also called a lipid) that your body needs to work properly. Too much bad cholesterol can increase your chance of getting heart disease, stroke, and other problems. The medical term for high blood cholesterol is lipid disorder, hyperlipidemia, or hypercholesterolemia.

### Causes:

-  Being overweight.
-  Lack of exercise.

Some health conditions can also lead to abnormal cholesterol, including:

-  Diabetes.
-  Kidney disease.
-  Polycystic ovary syndrome.
-  Pregnancy and other conditions that increase levels of female hormones.
-  Underactive thyroid gland.

Medicines such as certain birth control pills, diuretics (water pills), beta-blockers, and some medicines used to treat depression may also raise cholesterol levels. Several disorders that are passed down through families lead to abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels. They include:

-  Familial combined hyperlipidemia.
-  Familial dysbetalipoproteinemia.
-  Familial hypercholesterolemia.
-  Familial hypertriglyceridemia.

Smoking does not cause higher cholesterol levels, but it can reduce your HDL ("good") cholesterol.

### LDL (Bad) Cholesterol

LDL stands for low-density lipoprotein. It's also sometimes called "bad" cholesterol. Lipoproteins are made of fat and protein. They carry cholesterol, triglycerides, and other fats, called lipids, in the blood to various parts of the body. LDL can clog your arteries.

A healthy LDL level is one that falls in the best or near-best range.

-  Best: Less than 100 mg/dL (less than 70 mg/dL for persons with a history of heart disease or those at very high risk).
-  Near Best: 100 - 129 mg/dL.
-  Borderline High: 130 - 159 mg/dL.
-  High: 160 - 189 mg/dL.
-  Very High: 190 mg/dL and higher.

## HDL (Good) Cholesterol

HDL stands for high-density lipoprotein. It's also sometimes called "good" cholesterol. Lipoproteins are made of fat and protein. They carry cholesterol, triglycerides, and other fats, called lipids, in the blood from other parts of your body to your liver.

A healthy HDL level should be as follows:

-  Men: Above 40 mg/dL.
-  Women: Above 50 mg/dL.
-  An HDL 60 mg/dL or above helps protect against heart disease. Exercise helps raise your HDL cholesterol.

## VLDL (Bad) Cholesterol

VLDL stands for very low density lipoprotein. A normal VLDL cholesterol level is between 5 and 40 mg/dL.

## High blood cholesterol

High blood cholesterol is a condition in which you have too much cholesterol in your blood. By itself, the condition usually has no signs or symptoms. So, many people don't know that their cholesterol levels are too high. People who have high blood cholesterol have a greater chance of getting coronary heart disease, also called coronary artery disease. The higher the level of LDL cholesterol in your blood, the GREATER your chance is of developing heart disease. The higher the level of HDL cholesterol in your blood, the LOWER your chance is of developing heart disease.

## High Cholesterol Prevention:

-  Quit smoking.
-  Lose weight.
-  Exercising regularly.
-  Eat heart healthy foods.

## Avoid:

-  Red meat , whole milk products , fried foods , bakery products , egg yolks , ghee , butter etc.

## Have more of:

-  Whole grains , fruits & vegetables , oils rich in monosaturated fats (olive , canola , peanut) , foods rich in omega 3 fatty acids (salmon , almond , walnuts , mackerel etc).
-  Drink alcohol only in moderation.

## Reference Links:

-  <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/magazine/issues/summer12/articles/summer12pg4.html>
-  <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000386.htm>
-  <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000403.htm>
-  <http://www.healthline.com/health/high-cholesterol-prevention>

**For any enquiry or assistance please contact:** [wellness@medicaretpa.co.in](mailto:wellness@medicaretpa.co.in)

**Disclaimer:** No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.