

Tips to Lowering High Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that your body needs. When you have too much cholesterol in your blood, it can build up on your artery walls. Too much cholesterol puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke. There are no symptoms of high cholesterol. The only way to know is with a simple blood test. If you have been recently diagnosed with high cholesterol, now is the time to take action by taking control of your own health.

The Importance of a Heart-Healthy Diet

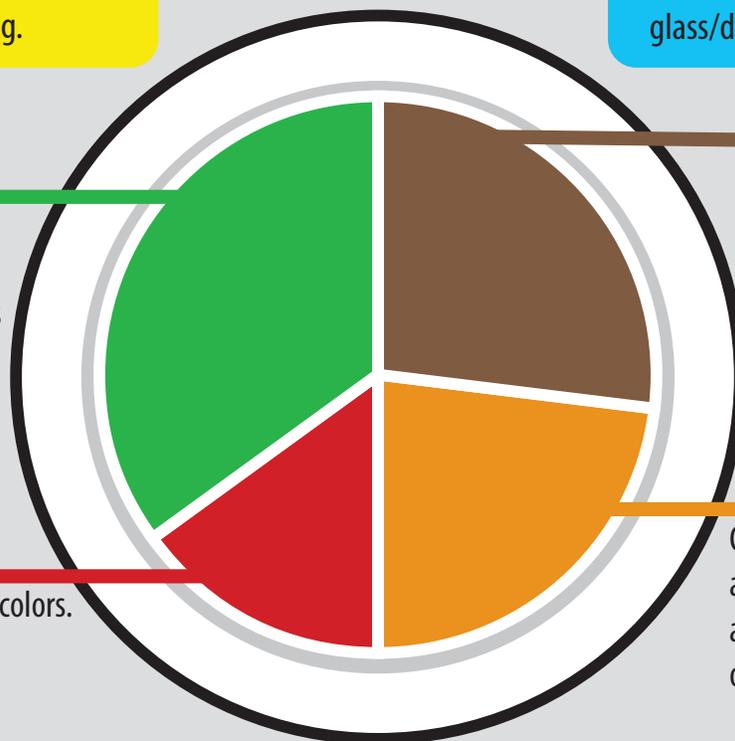
Making healthy food choices can reduce the risk of having high levels of bad cholesterol which can cause heart disease, heart attack, or stroke. Here are some helpful tips:

Use healthy oils (like olive and vegetable oil) for cooking, and on salad. Limit butter. Avoid trans fat, like shortening.

Drink water, tea, or coffee (with little or no sugar). Limit milk/dairy (1-2 servings/day) and juice (1 small glass/day). Avoid sugary drinks.

Eat more veggies, the more variety the better. Potatoes and french fries don't count.

Eat plenty of fruits of all colors.



Eat whole grains (like brown rice, whole-wheat bread, and whole-grain pasta). Limit refined grains (like white rice and white bread).

Choose fish, poultry, beans, and nuts; limit red meat; avoid bacon, cold cuts, and other processed meats.

It's OK to eat eggs! Many people believe they should avoid eggs because they contain cholesterol, but eggs are actually low in saturated fat and very good for you.

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Things You Can Do to Manage Your Cholesterol

- If you smoke, quit.
- Don't drink too much alcohol.
- Exercise almost every day.
- Lose weight, if necessary.
- Keep track of the amount of calories you eat per day (ask your doctor what is a healthy amount for you).
- If you have diabetes, high blood pressure or another condition, make sure to get that under control. It can lower your cholesterol levels.

Medicines That Help Treat High Cholesterol: Statins

For some, exercising and eating healthy might not be enough to lower cholesterol levels, so, your doctor may recommend a medicine called a statin. Talk to your doctor about your options.

- Statins help lower cholesterol and prevent heart disease.
- A statin might also be recommended depending on your family history and your individual risk for a heart attack or stroke over the next 10 years.
- Some examples of statins include Lipitor (generic name: atorvastatin), Crestor (generic name: rosuvastatin), and Zocor (generic name: simvastatin).