

## Improving your High Blood Cholesterol

**LDL:** Think of L as Lousy - this is your **bad cholesterol**. High LDL can lead to plaque buildup in your blood vessels and increases your risk of heart attack or stroke.

LDL is often raised by a diet high in saturated fats and refined carbohydrates

- ✗ **Items to limit:** fried foods, fast food, red meat, chocolate, whole milk, full fat yogurt, cheese, simple carbohydrate items (jelly beans, fruit candies, and other high sugar foods), desserts and items made with hydrogenated fats including cake icing, microwave popcorn, ramen noodles and some snack foods. Check label for saturated fats and trans fats.
- ✓ **Items to increase:** high fiber foods like vegetables, fruit and whole grain and fatty fish. Exercise is also beneficial.

**HDL:** Think of H as Healthy- this is your **good cholesterol**. High HDL is protective of your heart and can clean the plaque out of your blood vessels.

HDL is often raised by weight loss (if needed), exercise, fiber and fish

- ✗ **Items to limit:** alcohol, fried foods, fast food, red meat, chocolate, whole milk, full fat yogurt, cheese, desserts and items made with hydrogenated fats including cake icing, microwave popcorn, ramen noodles and some snack foods. Check label for saturated fats and trans fats.
- ✓ **Items to increase:** fatty fish, high fiber items like vegetables fruit and whole grains. Quit smoking and increase exercise.

**Triglycerides:** This is a measure of the **fat in your blood**. High triglycerides may lead to heart disease. Very high triglycerides are sometimes a measure of high blood sugar or excess alcohol intake.

Triglycerides are often raised by excessive amounts of refined carbohydrates or alcohol.

- ✗ **Items to limit:** sugar, high sugar foods, snack foods such as cookies, biscuits, candy, ice cream, cake; excessive starchy foods such as potatoes, pasta, rice, macaroni and cheese; alcohol
- ✓ **Items to increase:** exercise, high fiber foods such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables; fatty fish.

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### Optimal Levels

LDL.....under 100

Triglyceride.....under 150

HDL.....**for MEN:** over 40.....**for WOMEN:** over 50

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## Sample Menu to Lower Cholesterol

**Breakfast:** Rolled oats with berries, flaxseed meal and cinnamon, made with low fat cow's milk or unsweetened almond milk

**Lunch:** Salad with green vegetables, legumes, pumpkin seeds and olive oil based dressing, 1 serving of whole grain, high fiber crackers (like Triscuits or Ak Mak), small orange

**Snack:** Hummus with carrots

**Dinner:** Salmon baked with lemon and dill; farro mixed with roasted asparagus, red onions, and small amount of feta cheese; large green salad

**Dessert:** Fresh pear, sliced

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