

Your Managerial Role

High cholesterol maintenance is key to reducing your chance of heart attack and stroke

High cholesterol is a common condition that can be treated with diet, exercise, and medication prescribed by your doctor.

High cholesterol is diagnosed through blood tests. In some people, it isn't discovered until after

a heart attack or stroke.

Cholesterol management is important to good health and decreases your chance of heart attack and stroke.

In the last edition, we discussed cholesterol, risk factors, and helpful ways to remember to take your medication.

This edition of

In the Know focuses on how to lower your cholesterol with lifestyle changes, prescription, and non-prescription medication.

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Don't forget » There is more than one way to reduce cholesterol.

Food For Thought

Is there more than one way to reduce cholesterol?

While taking medication remains one of the most effective ways to reduce total cholesterol, it isn't the only way. Diet alone can reduce bad cholesterol by as much as 30%. It's important to pick heart-healthy foods.

Typical heart-healthy foods are fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat meats (e.g., skinless chicken, fish). Things to avoid in a heart-healthy diet include: high-fat proteins, salty foods, and unhealthy fats.

You can spot unhealthy fats; they're the ones that are solid at room temperature (e.g., butter, lard, bacon fat). When cooking, try substituting olive oil, canola oil, or trans fat-free margarine whenever possible.

One of the best ways to start eating healthier is by reading labels. You can't eat healthier if you don't know what you're eating. Reading labels isn't difficult, you just need to get in the habit.

First, start at the top of the label with the serving size and how many servings per container. Next, look at the calories in each serving.

In order to maintain your weight, the amount of calories you eat must be the same as the amount you burn. The next and most important part of a label lists total fat, cholesterol, and sodium. The recommended daily limits for a 2,000 calorie/day diet to

Start here	Nutrition Facts	
	Serving Size 1 slice (47g) Servings Per Container 6	
Check the total calories per serving	Amount Per Serving	
	Calories 160	Calories from Fat 90
Limit these nutrients		% Daily Value*
	Total Fat 10g	15%
	Saturated Fat 2.5g	11%
	Trans Fat 2g	
	Cholesterol 0mg	0%
	Sodium 300mg	12%
Get enough of these nutrients	Total Carb 15g	5%
	Dietary Fiber less than 1g	3%
	Sugars 1g	
	Protein 3g	
	Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 4%
	Calcium 45%	Iron 6%
Quick Guide to % Daily Value : 5% or less is low 20% or more is high	Thiamin 8%	Riboflavin 6%
	Niacin 6%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.		

Click to Learn » For more information on a heart-healthy diet, visit the American Heart Association at www.heart.org.

remain heart healthy are: 14 grams or less of saturated fats, less than 2 grams of trans fat, and 1,500 mg or less of sodium (salt).

Limiting cholesterol is extremely important as well, and if you are taking a cholesterol medication, you should eat less than 200 mg of cholesterol a day.

Benefits of Exercise

Even in moderation, breaking a sweat helps raise good cholesterol

While eating right and losing weight help reduce your bad cholesterol, exercise is the best way to increase your good cholesterol (HDL).

Exercise has been shown to increase HDL up to 20%; it also decreases your bad cholesterol by 10-15%.

The American Heart Association recommends 30-60 minutes of moderate

exercise per day. This doesn't have to be all at once. If you put in 10 minutes a few times a day, you will be at 30 minutes before you know it.

Exercise not only increases your HDL, it also lowers your blood pressure, weight, and blood sugars.

Unfortunately for some patients, even after three to six months of lifestyle

changes (e.g., diet and exercise), cholesterol levels may still be too high. These patients are often prescribed medication.

If you have tried lifestyle changes and are then prescribed a medication, remember diet and exercise still play an important role in reducing your risks for heart attack and stroke.

Medications that effectively decrease cholesterol

The most effective medications for reducing LDL are called "statins." Statins work by limiting the amount of cholesterol your body makes. They can decrease your bad cholesterol by as much as 60%.

If diet and exercise don't get your cholesterol levels low enough, a statin is the most common medication prescribed. These medications are important to take exactly as prescribed to get the most benefit.

Statins also have some interactions with food, other medications, and herbal

Medication	When to take it
Lipitor (atorvastatin)	Anytime
Zocor (simvastatin)	Evening or bedtime
Mevacor (lovastatin)	With meals (morning and evening) or as directed by your doctor
Pravachol (pravastatin)	Bedtime
Lescol (fluvastatin)	Bedtime
Crestor (rosuvastatin)	Anytime
Livalo (pitavastatin)	Anytime

supplements. It's important to talk to your doctor and pharmacist about other medications and supplements you're taking before starting any new medication.

Some statins work better if taken at night or just before bedtime. Some patients can't

take statins because of side effects. If you're one of them, talk to your doctor about your exact side effect and discuss other possible causes.

If you are still not able to take statins, talk to your doctor about other medications to decrease your cholesterol.

What's Your Cholesterol IQ?

1. The best way to increase your GOOD cholesterol is through exercise:

- a. True
- b. False

2. Which of the following is part of a heart-healthy diet?

- a. Fruits
- b. Vegetables
- c. Bacon fat
- d. Skinless chicken
- e. All but c

3. It doesn't matter what time you take the following medications EXCEPT?

- a. Lipitor (atorvastatin)
- b. Zocor (simvastatin)
- c. Crestor (rosuvastatin)
- d. Livalvo (pitavastatin)

4. Fish oil supplements containing high concentrations of DHA and EPA are the most beneficial.

- a. True
- b. False

5. If you work out 10 minutes three times daily it may help lower your cholesterol.

- a. True
- b. False

(Find the answers at the bottom left of this page.)

What you should know about herbal supplements

Many supplements claim to reduce cholesterol or reduce the risk of heart disease.

The supplements that may work best include Vitamin B3 and fish oil. Vitamin B3 (niacin) can lower your bad cholesterol (LDL) as much as 10% while also raising your HDL and decreasing your triglycerides.

Vitamin B3 does have some side effects, including: hot flashes, nausea, and increased blood

sugars.

Another helpful supplement is fish oil. Fish oil may reduce your risk of heart disease by lowering your triglycerides, but not all fish oils are the same.

It's important when selecting a fish oil to look at the ingredient label.

Look for high concentrations of DHA and EPA, as those are the most beneficial ingredients.



Ask the expert »

Before you start taking any herbal supplement, always discuss it with your doctor.