

HOW'S YOUR CHOLESTEROL LEVEL?

There are many things a person can do for their heart. Diet and exercise are at the top of that list. We know that a diet that is high in refined and processed foods will increase your risk of having heart disease. A diet that is high in wholesome food will help prevent heart disease. When you think about the different types of food think about processing. You wouldn't dig up a potato chip or pick an ear of corn chips. These foods are not in their natural state. They have been processed by man to make a more appealing product. One of the worst things you can eat for your heart is hydrogenated, or partially hydrogenated fat. This type of fat is found in margarine,



shortening, chips, bakery products, crackers, candy bars, and many other products. It is manufactured by man to make a more shelf-stable product. This type of fat is solid at room temperature, and an analogy for it is that it stays solid in your vessels causing plaque build-up and blockages. Our muffins and bakery products use liquid oil, and our chips are not hydrogenated. We have alternatives for you.

When talking about cholesterol, we need to talk about all the cholesterol. We need to remember that the total cholesterol is made up of the HDL, high-density lipoprotein, or the good cholesterol, the LDL, low-density lipoprotein, or the bad cholesterol, and the triglycerides. The HDL's will actually help pull cholesterol out of the blood vessels preventing plaque build up. The LDL's will deposit cholesterol and plaque in the blood vessels causing blockages. A recent study in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, explained that people who live to be 100 have a high amount of HDL cholesterol protecting them from heart disease. This is in spite of the fact that these people smoke, eat a high fat diet, and do not exercise. If we can

stimulate our HDL's we can increase our life span and not have to worry about cholesterol. The only ways I know of to increase the HDL's is to exercise, don't smoke, take *Kyolic Aged Garlic Extract*, and take *Barleans Flax Oil*. These are the only things we know of to raise HDL's. To protect the body from building up LDL's it is important to prevent the oxidation of the LDL's. The antioxidants called *ACES* will prevent the LDL's from oxidizing and building up in your vessels. The triglycerides come from stress, simple carbohydrates, and alcohol. If triglycerides are high, you are eating too much simple carbohydrates and not coping with your stress. All of these things will help keep your heart healthy.

The National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) issued major new clinical practice guidelines on the prevention and management of high cholesterol in adults. Key changes in the new guidelines are: More aggressive cholesterol-lowering treatment and better identification of those at high risk for a heart attack; use of a lipoprotein profile as the first test for high cholesterol; a new level at which low HDL becomes a major heart disease risk factor; a new set of "Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes," with more power to improve cholesterol levels; a sharper focus on a cluster of heart disease risk factors known as "the metabolic syndrome;" and increased attention to the treatment of high triglycerides.

The new guidelines are expected to substantially expand the number of Americans being treated for high cholesterol, raising the number on dietary treatment from about 52 million to about 65 million and increasing the number prescribed a cholesterol-lowering drug from about 13 million to about 36 million.

Americans at high risk for a heart attack include those with heart disease or diabetes, and many of those with multiple heart disease risk factors. The guidelines state that diabetes poses as great a risk for having a heart attack in 10 years as heart disease itself and the threat from multiple risk factors can be equally great.

A lipoprotein profile measures levels of LDL, total cholesterol, HDL, and triglycerides, another fatty substance in the blood. The prior recommendation called for initial screening with test for only total cholesterol. The guidelines

advise healthy adults to have a lipoprotein analysis once every 5 years

The new level at which low HDL becomes a major risk factor for heart disease is less than 40 mg/dl. Previously, a low HDL was less than 35 mg/dl. The change reflects new findings about the significance of a low HDL, and the strong link between a low HDL and an increased risk of heart disease. An HDL level of 60 mg/dl or more is considered protective against heart disease.

We also have to identify a “metabolic syndrome” of risk factors linked to insulin resistance, which often occur together and dramatically increase the risk for coronary events. The syndrome includes factors such as too much abdominal fat (indicated by too large a waist measurement), elevated blood pressure, elevated triglycerides, and low HDL. Therapy for the syndrome emphasizes lifestyle changes, especially weight control and physical activity. Insulin controls the body’s metabolism of carbohydrates, fats, and protein. In insulin resistance, its normal actions are impaired. The metabolic syndrome has emerged as being as strong a contributor to early heart disease as cigarette smoking. In addition, the insulin resistance that goes along with the syndrome is one of the underlying causes of Type 2 diabetes. It’s thus very important to recognize the syndrome and treat it with lifestyle changes.

The first line of treatment for high cholesterol should be diet modification and exercise. Increasing the amount of whole foods in you diet can drastically reduce your cholesterol risk. Hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated fats are especially harmful to your health. These man made fats cause a rise in LDL cholesterol, therefore causing a rise in your risk factor for heart disease.

Eating vegetables are very beneficial to the heart. The naturally occurring phytochemicals, low sugar content, and high fiber content make them great for your heart.

Fruit intake should be limited to only the fruit you eat the skin with. For example, an apple is a better choice than a banana. The fiber in the skin of the fruit will slow down the digestion of the sugar in the fruit.

Grains, breads, and cereals should only be eaten in their whole state. Whole grain or 7-grain bread is a much better choice than white bread or wheat bread. Pearled barley is a better cereal than oatmeal. The least amount of processing a food undergoes, the more fiber, and nutritional value a food has.

Lean meats, eggs, and most dairy products are fine for people with high cholesterol levels. Several new studies on eggs and high cholesterol show that eating 2 eggs every morning will not raise your cholesterol level. Be wary of fat-free or low-fat dairy products. Most low fat or fat free products have an increased amount of sugar and sodium to compensate for the loss of flavor from fat. This is particularly bad for diabetics and people with high triglycerides.

Exercise is a vital part of any heart healthy program. A minimum of 20 minutes 3 to 4 times per week is necessary for cardiac health. A strength-training program can also be helpful. Stimulating the large muscles will increase resting metabolic rate, which burns more fat in the arteries and around the gut.

A good protocol for heart health would include:

1. Flax seed oil
2. ACES (antioxidants)
3. Kyolic aged garlic
4. Choline and Inositol
5. B-Stress Complex
6. Exercise program
7. Diet program
8. Do not smoke
9. Stress Reduction

A combination of the above protocol will greatly reduce your risk of heart disease and improve your cholesterol levels.

For more information on heart disease please visit Eat-Rite Health Promotion Center in Wolflin Square.