



News

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SCIENTISTS FIND YOUNGEST PERSON YET WITH GENETIC CHOLESTEROL DEFECT

Scientists at the University of Maryland Medical Center have identified the youngest person in the world known to have a genetic disorder that causes extremely low levels of HDL, the "good" form of cholesterol. The 14-year old boy, from Winchester, Virginia, had a normal total cholesterol level, but his HDL was only 3 mg/dL, about 15 times lower than average. With such a low level, a person is at high risk of kidney failure, vision loss, or heart disease at a young age.

"We had never seen such low levels in an otherwise healthy young person," says Michael Miller, M.D., director of preventive cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center. Average HDL in men is 45 mg/dL and 55 mg/dL in women. Dr. Miller is lead author of an article about this unusual case published today in the Journal of Lipid Research.

The boy's cholesterol was tested after his father, an emergency room physician, died of a heart attack at age 38. Dr.

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