

Natural Ways to Lower Cholesterol Levels

Elevated cholesterol levels are usually a result of increased production of cholesterol within the liver. Certain kinds of stress, inflicted on the body, will stimulate the liver to produce excess cholesterol. Some types of cholesterol-stimulating-stress are caused by unhealthy eating and lifestyle habits. **Exchanging unhealthy habits for healthy habits can help lower cholesterol levels.** WOW! That is hard to believe. How can eating and lifestyle habits make that big of a difference? Read on and find out.

The body is stressed when a person eats too much saturated fat from animal products. Excess consumption of saturated fat inflicts a cholesterol-stimulating-stress upon the body. **Choose lean meat and low fat dairy products to decrease saturated fat in your diet.**

Excess cholesterol in the body has to be escorted from body by fiber and omega 3 fatty acids. Eating foods rich in omega 3 fatty acids can help lower high cholesterol levels. Oily fish, like salmon, mackerel, sardines, trout, cod and haddock, provide the best source of omega 3 fatty acid. **Eat oily fish 2 to 3 times a week.**

Whole foods from plants provide fiber in our diet. **Eat more fruits, vegetables, and legumes (dried beans). Choose foods made with whole grains. Eat nuts and seeds once a day.** All of these foods provide a multitude of important vitamins and minerals (i.e. vitamins B3, B5, B6, B12, folic acid and choline, vitamins C and E, selenium, magnesium and iodine) that play key roles in helping decrease cholesterol levels in the body. Whole foods from plants are good sources of antioxidants. Antioxidants are special nutrients that counteract cholesterol-stimulating-stress. Monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) help lower cholesterol levels. Nuts, avocados and olives are all good sources of MUFA.

Numerous studies have shown that garlic lowers total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL (bad cholesterol), and increases HDL (good cholesterol). **Eat garlic on a regular basis.**

Hydrogenated oils contain trans fats. Trans fats block the body's ability to utilize omega 3 fatty acids. Because of this, trans fats increase both LDL (bad cholesterol) and total cholesterol levels. **Avoid eating foods that contain trans fats (hydrogenated oils).**

Refined sugar inflicts a cholesterol-stimulating-stress on the body. **Avoid eating foods that contain refined sugar.**

The body turns unused energy into triglycerides to be stored in fat cells. This process raises triglyceride levels. High triglyceride levels inflict a cholesterol-stimulating-stress on the body. **Don't over eat. Eat to meet body's daily energy needs.**

Obesity can cause elevations in triglyceride levels. **Obtain and maintain a healthy weight.**

Inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle contributes to higher cholesterol levels. **Try to get 30 minutes of aerobic exercise most every day.**

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