

High Cholesterol: Care Instructions



Overview

Cholesterol is a type of fat in your blood. It is needed for many body functions, such as making new cells. Cholesterol is made by your body. It also comes from food you eat. High cholesterol means that you have too much of the fat in your blood. This raises your risk of a heart attack and stroke.

LDL and HDL are part of your total cholesterol. LDL is the "bad" cholesterol. High LDL can raise your risk for coronary artery disease, heart attack, and stroke. HDL is the "good" cholesterol. It helps clear bad cholesterol from the body. High HDL is linked with a lower risk of coronary artery disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Your cholesterol levels help your doctor find out your risk for having a heart attack or stroke. You and your doctor can talk about whether you need to lower your risk and what treatment is best for you.

Treatment options include a heart-healthy lifestyle and medicine. Both options can help lower your cholesterol and your risk. The way you choose to lower your risk will depend on how high your risk is for heart attack and stroke. It will also depend on how you feel about taking medicines.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Eat heart-healthy foods.
 - Eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, and other high-fiber foods.
 - Eat lean proteins, such as seafood, lean meats, beans, nuts, and soy products.
 - Eat healthy fats, such as canola and olive oil.
 - Choose foods that are low in saturated fat.
 - Limit sodium and alcohol.
 - Limit drinks and foods with added sugar.
- Be physically active. Try to do moderate activity at least 2½ hours a week. Or try to do vigorous activity at least 1¼ hours a week. You may want to walk or try other activities, such as running, swimming, cycling, or playing tennis or team sports.
- Stay at a healthy weight or lose weight by making the changes in eating and physical activity listed above. Losing just a small amount of weight, even 5 to 10 pounds, can help reduce your risk for having a heart attack or stroke.
- Do not smoke.
- Manage other health problems. These include diabetes and high blood pressure. If you think you may have a problem with alcohol or drug use, talk to your doctor.
- If you take medicine, take it exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you use any other medicines, including over-the-counter medicines. Make sure your doctor knows all of the medicines, vitamins, herbal products, and supplements you take. Taking some medicines together can cause problems.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You need help making lifestyle changes.
- You have questions about your medicine.

Care instructions adapted under license by Privia - Jcm - Jincare Medical LLC. This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.