

Wellness

REVIEW

Cholesterol Management



The Low-Down On Cholesterol

It seems that everyone is talking about cholesterol these days, but do you really know what it is? What can you do to maintain healthy cholesterol levels?

Cholesterol is a type of fat that is carried around in the blood. It performs useful functions in the body and is a major building block for cells and many of your hormones, including oestrogen, testosterone and cortisol. Cholesterol is also important for the synthesis of vitamin D, as well as bile acids which aid in the digestion of fats. Our bodies manufacture cholesterol but it can also be found in foods containing saturated fats. It is important to check your cholesterol levels regularly. Even though our bodies need some cholesterol, having high cholesterol can be bad for your health and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The Good vs. The Bad Cholesterol

HDL and LDL are letters that you may have seen before on a blood test, and your Practitioner will be interested in reviewing these to monitor your health. But what do they mean? Your total cholesterol is made up of two types of cholesterol, often referred to as “good” and “bad” cholesterol.

- High Density Lipoprotein (HDL) is essentially the “good” form of cholesterol. It carries cholesterol from the tissues to the liver to be broken down and excreted. HDL helps to decrease cardiovascular risk.
- Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) is often referred to as the “bad” form of cholesterol. High levels of LDL cholesterol can leave cholesterol deposits in the arteries, increasing the risk of the coronary artery disease known as atherosclerosis.
- It is important to keep your HDL:LDL ratio in balance; aim towards having higher levels of the “good” and lower levels of the “bad” cholesterol.

Natural Support For Cholesterol

Your Practitioner can assess your cholesterol levels and your risk of cardiovascular disease. Being aware of your current state of health gives you the opportunity to take positive steps to improve your health right now. Staying healthy in the present will reduce your risk of cardiovascular and chronic disease in the future.

Your Practitioner can prescribe some key nutrients specifically to help you maintain healthy cholesterol levels and cardiovascular health:

- **Polymethoxyflavones:** Also known as PMFs, these natural antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds found in citrus peel assist in maintaining healthy cholesterol levels. Research has shown that nobiletin and tangeretin, the

phytochemicals found in PMFs, may assist in lowering LDL levels by reducing synthesis and increasing the clearance of LDL cholesterol.

- **Tocotrienols:** Tocotrienols are members of the vitamin E family. These antioxidants also increase the clearance of LDL cholesterol and reduce the body’s production of LDL.
- **Krill oil:** The oil from the crustacean, krill, has been shown to be beneficial for cholesterol balance, particularly by supporting HDL levels.
- **Fish oil:** 2 g to 4 g of combined EPA/DHA has been shown to decrease triglyceride levels and is beneficial for heart health.

Six Tips For Optimal Cardiovascular Performance

Take on these tips for eating and living to support healthy cholesterol and cardiovascular health:

- Follow the Mediterranean diet. People eating this diet rich in essential nutrients and antioxidants have the lowest rates of cardiovascular disease in the world.
- Reduce saturated fats by choosing lean meats. Eating too much saturated fat may increase your weight and cholesterol levels.
- Eliminate detrimental trans fats found in many fast foods, fried foods and packaged baked goods.
- Cut down on sugary refined carbohydrates and processed food. These foods often contain ‘hidden sugars’ that can be converted to fat when supply is high.
- Weight loss. If you are overweight, losing extra weight will help to lose the risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease. Your Practitioner can recommend a clinically-proven weight loss program and targeted supplements to assist healthy weight management.
- Get moving towards a healthy lifestyle. Exercise improves cardiovascular and overall health and supports your “good” cholesterol levels. Move away from unhealthy habits such as smoking and excessive alcohol intake as they increase your cardiovascular risk.

Getting Your Ratios Right For Life

Achieving and maintaining healthy cholesterol levels can be simple with the support of your healthcare Practitioner. With the help of natural medicines and by following some key dietary and lifestyle recommendations, you can effectively manage your cholesterol levels. Talk to your Practitioner today to get started on your journey towards improved cardiovascular health.