Cloresterol

Cholesterol Testing

All adults age 20 and over should have their total blood cholesterol **checked at least every 5 years.** Blood cholesterol levels of under 200 mg/dl are called "desirable" and put you at a lower risk for heart disease. Unlike total cholesterol, the lower your HDL, the higher your risk for heart disease. A HDL level less than 35 mg/dl increases your risk of heart disease. The higher your HDL level, the better.

**Desirable Cholesterol Levels:**   
Total cholesterol: Less than 200 mg/dL   
Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol ("bad" cholesterol): Less than 100 mg/dL   
High Density Lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol ("good" cholesterol): 40 mg/dL or higher   
Triglycerides: Less than 150 mg/dL

A healthy total cholesterol is under 200 milligrams of cholesterol per deciliter of blood (mg/dL). LDL cholesterol should be under 100 mg/dL, and ideal HDL is above 60 mg/dL. Optimal triglyceride levels are below 150 mg/dL.

Importance of Lowering Your Cholesterol Levels

Nuts, oats, barley, apples, olive oil, strawberries, beans, lentils ,citrus fruits, red wine, avocados, green tea,

The following list includes natural products that have been noted to reduce cholesterol levels through research:

* **B Vitamins**, besides niacin, decrease the rate at which LDL is damaged through oxidation.
* **Carnitine** has been seen to increase HDL levels, therefore decreasing total cholesterol levels.
* **Chromium** has been seen to reduce LDL levels and increase HDL levels.
* **Coenzyme Q10** has been noted to reduce total cholesterol serum levels.
* **Fiber** can be obtained through fiber supplements or through foods such as whole grains and vegetables. It is thought that fiber binds to cholesterol in the small intestine and preventing cholesterol absorption into the bloodstream.
* **Garlic** has been widely studies for its cholesterol-lowering properties.
* **Grape Seed Extract** has been noted to reduce total cholesterol serum levels.
* **Pantothine** has been seen to increase HDL levels, therefore decreasing total cholesterol levels.
* **Red yeast rice** contains a natural form of lovastatin. Effective natural product for cholesterol control. Included in Native Remedies Cholesto-Rite capsules.
* **Royal Jelly** has been seen to lower cholesterol levels by reducing some of the cholesterol-elevating effects of nicotine.
* **Soy** has been shown to reduce total cholesterol levels
* **Vitamin C** has been noted to slightly reduce cholesterol levels.
* (NaturalNews) Approximately 71 million adults suffer from high cholesterol, and only a third of these have it under control. (1) Considering that the condition significantly increases the risk of heart disease, management of high cholesterol is critically important. (2) While many Americans turn to prescription meds to control their cholesterol levels, there is a safer and more permanent approach: changing your diet. Read on to learn our picks for 10 amazing diet secrets to lower cholesterol and prevent heart disease.  
    
  **1. Edamame**  
  These vibrantly colored soybeans have a sweet taste and an even sweeter body benefit: They're rich in soluble fiber and isoflavones, both of which reduce cholesterol levels. An added benefit? Edamame is packed with protein -- a delicious and do-gooding snack!  
   **2. Oats**  
  We all know that breakfast is an important way to keep your body fueled throughout the day. Why not multiply the energizing effects of your morning meal by reaching for the oats? Foods like oatmeal and oat-based cereals offer cholesterol-reducing properties thanks to a high soluble fiber content. Just how much can oat consumption reduce your cholesterol levels? Up to 7 percent! (3)  
    
  **3. Green Tea**  
  While black tea can also lead to decreased cholesterol levels, green tea is particularly effective, because it is prepared from leaves that have not undergone the fermentation process. The result? A higher concentration of cholesterol-lowering antioxidants called catechins.  
    
  **4. Beans**  
  Yes, this "musical fruit" is good for your heart, but why? Beans are high in soluble fiber, which binds cholesterols during the digestive process and propels them from the body. From kidney beans to black-eyed peas and from lentils to limas, beans are versatile, tasty and an important partner in the fight against high [cholesterol](http://www.naturalnews.com/cholesterol.html).  
    
  **5. Nuts**  
  If you restrict your nut intake because of their high caloric content, reconsider. An abundance of research shows that nuts -- including peanuts, walnuts, pistachios, hazelnuts, pecans, almonds and others -- are rich in plant sterols, which prevent the absorption of cholesterol. Just a handful a day -- up to two ounces -- is all you need. (4)  
   **6. Avocados**  
  Creamy, flavorful antioxidant avocados contain oleic acid, which not only lowers bad (LDL) cholesterol but also gives good cholesterol a boost. As if that's not enough, avocados are loaded with fiber and beta-sitosterol, a plant chemical which helps moderate cholesterol levels.  
    
  **7. Pears**  
  An apple a day keeps the doctor away, but pectin-packed pears aren't too shabby either -- particularly when it comes to lowering cholesterol. In fact, fresh pears surpass apples in pectin content, which ushers cholesterol from the body before it is absorbed. To maximize fiber intake, don't peel the skin: just wash and eat. Peaches, oranges and bananas are also loaded with this beneficial type of fiber.  
    
  **8. Tomatoes**  
  Don't feel guilty about eating that bowl of whole-wheat pasta; just slather it in tomato sauce to help keep cholesterol in check. Tomatoes are bursting with lycopene, a plant compound which lowers LDL cholesterol levels. Cooked and processed tomatoes enhance lycopene absorption, so stock up on tomato juice, tomato soup and other tomato-based treats.  
    
  **9. Eggplant**  
  While eggplant may not immediately come to mind when pondering cholesterol-reducing foods, this purple plant offers a multitude of health benefits, including controlling LDL cholesterol levels. In fact, some research has shown that including eggplant in a meal lowers cholesterol by up to 30 percent thanks to its high soluble fiber content. (5) Okra also falls into the category of little known cholesterol-reducing veggies.  
    
  **10. Fish**  
  The benefits of a plant-based [diet](http://www.naturalnews.com/diet.html) are increasingly evident, but sometimes you need to go fish. Salmon, lake trout, mackerel, herring, sardines and other fatty fish are high in LDL-reducing omega-3 fatty acids. Just how beneficial is eating fish? The American Heart Associations recommends its consumption at least twice weekly. (6)  
    
  If you suffer from high cholesterol, don't reach for the pills. Instead, try these 10 foods which offer a simple -- and delicious -- way to reduce your cholesterol and enjoy optimal heart health.
* Learn more: <http://www.naturalnews.com/045480_diet_secrets_lower_cholesterol_heart_disease.html#ixzz342bZFexp>