

Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance in your cells. Our bodies generally make all the cholesterol needed for good health. Cholesterol helps make hormones, vitamin D, and substances to help you digest foods. Small packages, called lipoproteins, carry cholesterol through your bloodstream. Two kinds of lipoproteins carry the cholesterol. You may have heard about “good” and “bad” cholesterol. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is the “good” cholesterol. Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) is the “bad” cholesterol.



Assessing Your Risk

Your health care professional will want to know whether you are at risk by 1) reviewing your medical and family history, and 2) gauging your overall risk for heart attack or stroke. They will want to know:

- Whether you’ve ever had a heart attack or stroke, or blockages in the arteries of your heart, neck or legs.
- Your risk factors. Your health care professional will consider your age, sex, whether you have diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and if you smoke.
- About your lifestyle. Your healthcare provider will ask about your diet and p

High Cholesterol

Check your cholesterol to avoid a heart attack or stroke If too much bad cholesterol is circulating in your blood, it can build up inside the arteries that feed your heart and brain. If the cholesterol buildup gets too thick, it can trap blood clots in your arteries and lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Heart-healthy lifestyle changes can help you control your cholesterol:

- Be physically active
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Aim for a healthy weight
- Quit smoking or vaping
- Reduce stress
- Get enough good-quality sleep