Cholesterol: Understand Your Numbers

Heart disease is known as a silent killer, and having high cholesterol is a major risk factor. There is no better time than now, Cholesterol Education Month, to make an appointment with your physician or attend a cholesterol screening to check your blood lipid profile. If you find your results confusing, use this guide to help you understand the main three components of your lipid profile.

**HDL (good) cholesterol**
High density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-c) is called the good cholesterol because it can reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke. Aim for a value above 60 mg/dL by increasing physical activity and eating a healthful diet.

**LDL (bad) cholesterol**
Low density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-c) is called the harmful cholesterol because it can build up and lead to heart disease. Aim for a value below 130 mg/dL if you are healthy, but lower if you have other risk factors (see next page).

**Total blood cholesterol**
Total blood cholesterol accounts for a sum of HDL, LDL and 20% of triglyceride values. A healthy level is considered anything below 180 - 200 mg/dL, depending on other risk factors.

**Triglycerides**
Triglycerides are a type of fat found throughout the body and can build up to an unhealthy level in your blood, if allowed. Normal values are considered 150 mg/dL or lower. Anything above this amount increases your risk for heart disease or stroke.

To learn more, visit the CDC’s helpful cholesterol education site: [http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/index.htm)

The American Heart Association recommends screening for lipids and other risk factors at the age of 20 and every 4-6 years after that.

Get your cholesterol screened today!
Unscrambling the Truth About Eggs

Eggs have had a bad reputation because the yolk contains natural cholesterol, which scares individuals away from eating them. However, we know from recent research that dietary cholesterol is not the largest cause of increased blood cholesterol. Instead, dietary trans and saturated fats are largely to blame since they increase production of cholesterol in the body.

An egg is considered the “gold standard” for dietary protein intake because it provides all of the essential amino acids and 8 grams of protein per egg. Eggs also contain at least 11% of daily vitamin D needs and provide choline for brain development. Since they do contain some fat and cholesterol, experts recommend no more than 7 eggs per week, or an average of 1/day. Eggs are an inexpensive, nutrient-dense food that can be enjoyed in moderation.

Are you at risk for high cholesterol?

There are multiple risk factors to having high LDL-c and total cholesterol. Be sure to discuss in detail with your doctor or dietitian each of the risk factors below.

**Diet** – As mentioned above, a diet high in saturated or trans fats can increase cholesterol levels. To learn more about fats, visit our newsletter archives:

[http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu/resources/archived-newsletters-recipes.aspx](http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu/resources/archived-newsletters-recipes.aspx)

**Overweight/Obesity** – Being overweight or obese increases cholesterol. Be aware that those at a healthy weight can also have high cholesterol if they possess other risk factors.

**Smoking** – Smoking causes a decrease in HDL-c levels while increasing triglycerides. If you are a smoker, ask your doctor or healthcare provider for resources to quit.

**Genes** – Even if you are healthy, there is still the possibility of having high cholesterol through genetically low HDL-c or high LDL-c. Know your family medical tree.

**Physical Inactivity** – Being inactive is related to an increase in weight and LDL-c. Physical activity can lower both triglycerides and LDL-c while increasing HDL-c!

**Age** – One’s risk for high cholesterol increases with age but like genes, this risk factor cannot be changed. Focus on healthy eating, avoiding tobacco and being physically active.

For more information or an individual meeting with a registered dietitian nutritionist, visit [www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu](http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu)
Get Healthy With KANC!

**FALL 2014**

★ **Free weight loss and mindful eating program**! Join us for our updated (and free this Fall only!) “Healthy You” mindful eating program, now featuring six fun, informative classes, program manual, pedometer, weekly snacks, and gift cards. Why is it free? We need to pilot test it to make sure it meets the needs of you, our clients. Join us for a life changing experience that encourages mindfulness, healthy living, behavior change and more, with proven weight loss results. Developed by registered dietitian nutritionists.

Wednesdays: October 15th, 22nd, 29th and November 5th, 12th, and 19th from 6 - 7 pm
Thursdays: October 16th, 23rd, 30th and November 6th, 13th, and 20th from 4 - 5 pm

Call soon to see if you are eligible; registration required by October 1, 2014

★ **Date Night Cooking Class** returns on Friday, October 10 from 6-8 PM. Skip the carryout and bring your special someone to our “Thai Takeout” event. Call to register or sign up online at [http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu/classes/date-night.aspx](http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu/classes/date-night.aspx)

**SPRING 2015: 2 GREAT PROGRAMS FOR A HEALTHIER YEAR**

★ **Dining With Diabetes** returns with 4 weekly classes that combine nutrition information and social support with meal planning and cooking skills practice. Dinner included each week in addition to program manual and pedometer. This program is especially helpful for anyone with pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes. Taught by registered dietitian nutritionists.

Thursdays: January 29th and February 5th, 12th, and 19th from 5:30 7:30 pm
Cost: $100 for complete series

★ **New and improved** “Healthy You” returns with 6 weekly classes that include weight loss, mindful eating and nutrition information. Participants receive program manual, pedometer, weekly snacks and prizes, and social support. Developed by registered dietitian nutritionists.

Wednesdays: March 25th and April 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th at 4pm
Cost: $100 for complete series

Classes fill up fast, so sign up online or call soon to reserve your spot!