

Lowering Your Cholesterol

Making Healthy Choices



Definitions

Polyunsaturated Fats

Usually liquid at room temperature. Found primarily in vegetable products.

Hidden Fats

A number of ingredients do not contain the word “fat” in their names, but they are high in fat content, particularly saturated fat. Examples: glycerol, hydrogenated shortening, lard, coconut and coconut oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil. These are often found in breads and crackers. A label that reads “Prepared with 100% vegetable oil” may in fact contain coconut, palm or palm kernel oils. Non-dairy creamers and whipped toppings often contain coconut oil.

Monounsaturated Fats

Usually liquid at room temperature. Found primarily in vegetable products. Present research indicates monounsaturated fats have a favorable effect on blood cholesterol when eaten in moderation.

Saturated Fats

Usually solid at room temperature. Most commonly found in animal products, they are also in such vegetable products as chocolate, coconut and vegetable products that have been hydrogenated (converted from a polyunsaturated to a saturated fat). Example: hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable shortening.

Cholesterol

A yellowish waxy material. Each cell contains a tiny amount. It is essential for the normal function of the cell. Your body makes some cholesterol “from scratch” to insure you never run out. Cholesterol travels through the blood stream, which is essentially water. Cholesterol is waxy (lipid). Oil and water don’t mix.

Cholesterol collects in the blood vessels which can lead to blockage. Lipoproteins are like “detergents” that help dissolve lipids, but they cannot keep up with this process if too much cholesterol is ingested.

Tips to Lower Cholesterol

- **Avoid Saturated Fats** - replace with polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats
- **Saturated Fats** - meat, poultry, whole dairy products, coconut oil, palm oil, and cocoa butter
- **Polyunsaturated Fats** - sunflower oil, safflower oil, corn oil, vegetable oil, and soybean oil
- **Monounsaturated Fats** - olive oil, canola (rapeseed) oil
- **Avoid Hydrogenated Oils** - more solid and saturated than regular vegetable oils
- **Limit egg yolks** to 2 to 3 per week. Two egg whites can be used in baking
- **Choose as many meats** from the Lean Meat column as possible. Remove skin and trim visible fat off meat. Bake, broil, roast, or grill instead of frying and set meats on a rack when cooking to allow fat to drip off meat
- **Limit liver** to one 3 oz. serving per month as it is high in cholesterol but a good source of iron
- **Choose skim milk** and nonfat dairy products
- **Total milligrams of cholesterol** in a sample meal plan is 185 mg and 30% of the calories are from fat
- **Limit salt intake** for sodium restricted diets

*Classification of Cholesterol Levels

LDL (BAD) Cholesterol (mg/dL)

< 100	Optimal
100-129	Near optimal/above optimal
130-159	Borderline high
160-189	High
≥ 190	Very high

HDL (GOOD) Cholesterol (mg/dL)

< 40	Low (a major risk factor)
≥ 40	The higher the better
≥ 60	Considered “protective” against heart disease

Total Cholesterol (mg/dL)

< 200	Desirable
200-239	Borderline high
≥ 240	High

Triglycerides (mg/dL)

< 150	Normal
150-199	Borderline high
200-499	High
≥ 500	Very high

*National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) Guidelines



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Milk and Cheese

Foods Allowed

Skim or 1% milk (liquid, dry, or evaporated), nonfat or low-fat yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese (1 to 2%), low-fat cheese (labeled no more than 6g fat per ounce)

Foods to Avoid

Whole milk, regular evaporated condensed or chocolate milk, whole milk yogurt, imitation milk products, most non-dairy creamers, whipped toppings

Fish, Meat and Poultry

Foods Allowed

Fish, tuna packed in water, poultry without skin, baked, boiled, broiled or roasted. LEAN, well-trimmed beef, lamb, pork or veal

Foods to Avoid

Fatty meats, organ meats, spareribs, regular cold cuts, sausage, hot dogs, bacon

Eggs

Foods Allowed

Whites (2 whites = 1 whole egg in recipes), cholesterol-free egg substitutes

Foods to Avoid

Egg yolks (try not to have more than 3 to 4 a week, including what is used in recipes)



Breads and Cereals

Foods Allowed

Homemade baked goods using vegetable oils sparingly, and no egg yolks or whole milk. Whole-grain breads, pasta, rice, hominy grits

Foods to Avoid

Commercial baked goods; pies, cakes, doughnuts, pastries, croissants, muffins, biscuits, high-fat crackers and cookies

Vegetables and Fruits

Foods Allowed

Any fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables

Foods to Avoid

Vegetables prepared in butter, cream, or other sauces



Fats and Oils

Foods Allowed

Baking cocoa, unsaturated vegetable oils such as olive, rapeseed (canola), corn, sesame, soybean, sunflower. Margarines made from one of the oils listed above. Mayonnaise or salad dressing made with one of the oils listed above. Seeds and nuts

Foods to Avoid

Chocolate! Butter, coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, lard, bacon fat, coconut and dressing made with egg yolks

Desserts

Foods Allowed

Fruit ices, sherbet, angel food cake, Jell-O®, frozen low-fat yogurt, and cakes, cookies, and muffins made with fat and cholesterol-modifying recipes

Foods to Avoid

Pastries, ice cream, cookies, cheese cake

Snacks

Foods Allowed

Graham crackers, Rye Crisp®, soda crackers, melba toast, bagels, fruit, English muffins, ready-to-eat cereals, air-popped popcorn, pretzels

Foods to Avoid

Snack crackers, corn chips, potato chips, tortilla chips, cheese puffs, French fries

