

# Improving Cholesterol

## What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that your body needs to build cells; however, too much can cause problems. Cholesterol comes from two sources: your liver and animal derived foods. Your liver makes all the cholesterol you need. The remainder of the cholesterol in your body comes from foods derived from animals. For example, meat, poultry and full-fat dairy products all contain 'dietary' cholesterol. *Those same foods are high in saturated and trans fats.*

## Saturated Fat

What is bad about it?

- When eaten to excess, saturated fat contributes to clogged arteries that block blood flow, increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- Fat is high in calories and, when eaten to excess, can also cause weight gain. Extra body weight puts stress on our vital organs.

Where is it found?

- Saturated fat is concentrated in fatty meats and full-fat dairy foods including cheese, ice cream, and whole milk. Animal foods supply most of the saturated fat in our diet; however, highly saturated vegetable fats, such as coconut oil, palm, palm kernel oil, and cocoa butter, are also unhealthy. They're widely used in packaged foods including milk chocolate, cookies, crackers, and snack chips.

How much?

- There's no dietary requirement for saturated fats because your body produces all it needs.

## Cholesterol *continued...*

### **Unsaturated Fat**

What is good about it?

- Unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) should be the dominant type of fat in a balanced diet, because they reduce the risk of clogged arteries.

Where is it found?

- Olive oil, canola oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil, flaxseed oil
- Nuts and seeds such as almonds, cashews, pistachios, peanuts, sunflower seeds, flaxseed oil
- Seafood

How much?

- On average 25-35 grams per day for kids ages 4-18 (20-35% of your total daily calories)
- Avoid eliminating fat in your diet because fat supplies essential fatty acids and your body is incapable of producing them. In addition, fat carries some vitamins into and around the body. Fat also plays a role in healthy skin, eyes and brain development.

### **What should I limit to improve my Cholesterol?**

- Sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages
- Red meats and fatty meats that aren't trimmed
- Meats that have been processed with a lot of sodium
- Full-fat dairy products such as whole milk, cream, ice cream, butter, and cheese
- Baked goods made with saturated and trans fats like donuts, cakes & cookies
- Foods that list the words "hydrogenated oils" in the ingredients panel
- Solid fats like shortening, stick margarine and lard
- Fried foods
- Foods with a lot of sodium (salt)

Making changes in your diet can improve your cholesterol levels. Choose foods low in saturated and trans fat, and high in fiber.

## Cholesterol *continued...*

The chart below will help you make heart healthy choices:

FOOD	CHOOSE MORE OFTEN	CHOOSE LESS OFTEN
<b>Dairy Products</b>	<p><b>Nonfat (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk; nonfat or low fat yogurt</b></p> <p><b>Nonfat, reduced fat, lite or low-fat cheeses</b></p> <p><b>Nonfat, light or low –fat cream cheese</b></p> <p><b>Nonfat or light sour cream</b></p>	<p><b>Whole/vitamin D milk, 2% milk</b></p> <p><b>Cream</b></p> <p><b>Half-and-half</b></p> <p><b>Dairy foods made from whole or reduced-fat milk or cream</b></p> <p><b>Ice cream, cheese, cream cheese, cottage cheese, pudding, yogurt, and sour cream</b></p>
<b>Meat, Poultry, Fish, Seafood</b>	<p><b>Beef: ground lean beef (90% fat free), sirloin, top round, flank</b></p> <p><b>Poultry without skin, baked or roasted</b></p> <p><b>Pork loin, center-cut pork</b></p> <p><b>Turkey bacon, turkey sausage</b></p> <p><b>Egg whites, egg substitute</b></p> <p><b>Fish/seafood: fresh, frozen, canned (water packed); not fried</b></p> <p><b>Lean luncheon meats such as chicken, turkey or turkey ham meats</b></p> <p><b>Low fat hot dog</b></p>	<p><b>Beef: hamburger, ribs, blade cuts</b></p> <p><b>Poultry with skin</b></p> <p><b>Bacon, sausage</b></p> <p><b>Whole eggs</b></p> <p><b>Fish/seafood: canned (oil packed)</b></p> <p><b>Regular luncheon meats, brats, metts, bologna</b></p> <p><b>Pepperoni</b></p> <p><b>Salami</b></p> <p><b>Hot dogs</b></p> <p><b>Regular peanut butter</b></p>
<b>Other Protein Sources</b>	<p><b>Beans and lentils/legumes</b></p> <p><b>Fat free or low fat refried beans</b></p> <p><b>Natural or reduced fat nut butter such as peanut, almond, sunflower butter</b></p> <p><b>Tofu and soy protein</b></p> <p><b>Nuts and seeds</b></p>	<p><b>Refried beans made with lard or regular cheese</b></p> <p><b>Baked beans made with bacon</b></p>
<b>Fats</b>	<p><b>Vegetable oils and cooking sprays such as olive oil, canola oil, or safflower oil</b></p> <p><b>Low saturated fat margarine with no <i>trans</i> fats</b></p> <p><b>Low fat, nonfat mayonnaise</b></p> <p><b>Salad dressings: nonfat, low fat, light, olive oil based</b></p> <p><b>Avocado</b></p>	<p><b>Stick margarine and other margarines made with hydrogenated oils</b></p> <p><b>Butter, lard</b></p> <p><b>Foods that contain coconut, palm kernel oil, palm oil</b></p> <p><b>Regular mayonnaise</b></p> <p><b>Regular, creamy salad dressing</b></p> <p><b>Gravy or meat drippings</b></p>

## Cholesterol *continued...*

<p><b>Fruits and Vegetables</b></p>	<p><b>Fruits: fresh, frozen, canned in own juice</b>  <b>100% fruit juices (4 to 6 ounces per day)</b>  <b>Vegetables: fresh, frozen, canned</b>  <b>Potatoes with skin (white and sweet variety)</b></p>	<p><b>Fruits prepared with added fat (chocolate and yogurt covered)</b>  <b>Fruits fried in fat</b>  <b>Vegetables in cheese sauce or cream sauce or prepared with butter</b>  <b>Vegetables breaded and fried vegetables such as onion rings, French fries, hash browns</b></p>
<p><b>Breads, Cereals and Other Starches</b></p>	<p><b>100% whole grain: bread, bagels, Whole wheat waffles and pancakes, Brown rice</b>  <b>Whole wheat pasta</b>  <b>Microwave popcorn or air-popped popcorn without any added fat</b>  <b>Baked potato chips</b>  <b>Baked tortilla chips</b></p>	<p><b>White bread and bagels, White pasta and rice</b>  <b>Crackers, waffles made from white flour</b>  <b>Regular popcorn</b>  <b>Biscuits</b>  <b>Cookies and cakes</b>  <b>Doughnuts, and croissants</b>  <b>Chips, tortilla chips, corn chips, cheese puffs</b>  <b>French fries</b></p>