

CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a soft, wax like substance found in the blood stream and in all of our body's cells. Cholesterol is used to make cell membranes and produce many of our hormones. Unfortunately, too much cholesterol can lead to heart disease and stroke. A person's cholesterol level is determined by a number of factors including heredity; liver, thyroid, and kidney function; and dietary habits.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

The average American with no history of Heart Disease or Diabetes should follow these guidelines. Compare your lab work....how do your results measure up?

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL	<200
LDL CHOLESTEROL	<130
HDL CHOLESTEROL	>40
TRIGLYCERIDES	<150
TOTAL/HDL RATIO	<4.0

TRIGLYCERIDES

Triglycerides are fatty molecules made of both fat and sugar. They

circulate in the blood with cholesterol and contribute to fatty buildup and blockages. Often times, triglyceride levels can change significantly with minor lifestyle changes. Reducing your intake of sugar, alcohol, and refined carbohydrates is a great way to reduce triglyceride levels. Regular cardiovascular exercise is another way to lower unhealthy levels.

LDL CHOLESTEROL

LDL Cholesterol, also known as the "bad cholesterol", is one of the major culprits in heart disease and stroke. LDL cholesterol sticks to the vessel walls causing blockages, which eventually restrict blood flow to the heart, brain, and other major organs.

LOWER CHOLESTEROL by:

1. Reducing your intake of saturated and trans-fats.
2. Increasing your intake of fiber, vegetables, and fruit.
3. Engaging in a regular exercise routine.
4. Maintaining a healthy weight.
5. Limiting your intake of dietary cholesterol to less than 300 mg.

HDL CHOLESTEROL

HDL Cholesterol, also known as the "good cholesterol", helps *reduce* one's risk for heart disease and stroke. HDL cholesterol removes excess LDL cholesterol by transporting it to the liver to be excreted from the body.

RAISE HDL CHOLESTEROL by:

1. Participating in cardiovascular exercise....walk, bike, swim!
2. Increasing your intake of Omega 3...fish, nuts, veggies.
3. Losing excess body fat.
4. Quitting smoking.
5. Adding an extra serving of dark-skinned fruits such as blueberries and blackberries.