



Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance found in the cells of your body. Your body needs some cholesterol to produce hormones and vitamin D. But, too much or too little can put you at risk for coronary heart disease, heart attack or stroke. So, it's important to know your numbers.

UNDERSTANDING CHOLESTEROL: HDL cholesterol is known as "good" cholesterol because it helps prevent arteries from being clogged.

LDL cholesterol is known as "bad" cholesterol as it can build up on the inside of artery walls leading to artery blockages that can lead to heart attacks.

Triglycerides are also a part of your cholesterol panel and are a type of fat often increased by sweets and alcohol.

Know your numbers	
Total Cholesterol:	Less than 200 = Desirable
	200-239 = Borderline high
	240-499 = High
	500+ = Very high
	LDL: Below 100 = Optimal
	Above 160 = High
HDL:	Above 40 = Desirable
	Above 60 = Optimal
Triglycerides:	Below 150 = Desirable
	150-199 = Borderline high
	200-499 = High
	500+ = Very high

- Eat a heart-healthy diet with plenty of fiber-rich foods (e.g., whole grains, fruits, beans, vegetables, raw nuts and seeds).
- Avoid saturated fats (found mostly in animal products) and trans-fatty acids (found in fast foods and processed baked goods).
- Choose unsaturated fats (omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil, avocados, nuts and olive/canola oils).
- Get 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise per day. Regular exercise can help boost HDL levels and reduce unhealthy triglycerides.
- Keep a healthy weight. Losing 5 to 10 percent of your bodyweight can help lower your LDL cholesterol levels.
- Don't smoke or quit if you do.

"The food you eat can be the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison."

– Ann Wigmore

Weekly SMART GOAL

I will add a portion of omega 3 rich foods to my diet

3 times a week.

Call a Blue Cross of Idaho health coach at

855-216-6844

or email Wellbeingcoach@bcidaho.com.

Get tips on how to stay healthy and use your plan benefits. Visit bluebulletin.bcidaho.com.

Sources: mayoclinic.org, HealthMedia.Inc, heart.org medlineplus.gov