

What you should know about high cholesterol



Did you know?

It is important to know your cholesterol numbers. Too much cholesterol in the blood can lead to heart disease, heart attack and stroke. Read on to learn how to manage your cholesterol.

Get your cholesterol tested

The National Institutes of Health recommends getting your cholesterol tested every five years. A blood test is used to check your cholesterol numbers. Talk to your doctor about ways to make certain your test results are correct.

Understand your cholesterol numbers

Total Cholesterol: Your total cholesterol is a measurement of both your good and bad cholesterol. A healthy total cholesterol is less than 200.

Bad Cholesterol (LDL): Too much bad cholesterol can lead to heart disease. If you do not have an ongoing health condition your bad cholesterol number should be less than 130. If you do have an ongoing health condition, talk to your doctor, your target number may be even lower.

Good Cholesterol (HDL): Good cholesterol helps protect you against heart disease. The higher your good cholesterol the better. HDL levels of 60 mg/dL or more help to lower your risk for heart disease. A level less than 40 mg/dL is too low and can make you more likely to develop heart disease.

Things you should do

- **Exercise** – Try to get 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. You don't have to go to the gym to get exercise and you don't have to do it all at once—three 10 minute sessions are just as good. Gardening, riding a bike and walking at a brisk pace all count towards your 30 minutes.
- **Eat a heart healthy diet** – Make sure your meals include fish, poultry, nuts and low-fat dairy products. Also, make sure you include fiber rich foods like oats, shredded wheat, apples, carrots and beans. Avoid saturated (animal) fat which can raise the levels of cholesterol in your blood.
- **Ask your doctor about cholesterol medicines** – There are many medicines that can help control cholesterol. If you have high cholesterol, talk to your doctor to see if one is right for you.

Call a health coach today toll-free at 1-888-275-1205

Available by phone 24/7, your HealthQuest health coach can help you understand what your cholesterol numbers mean to your health. A health coach can also help you work with your doctor to create a plan to manage your cholesterol. There is no cost to call a health coach and you can call as often as you like. For more healthy living support, visit us online at www.khpa.ks.gov/healthquest.

