

# CHOLESTEROL & HEART DISEASE



# Cholesterol & Heart Disease

Many of us know about cholesterol and heart disease. Many of us don't realise there is an argument in medicine whether cholesterol is the main cause of heart disease.

Some experts say that cholesterol is one of the main causes of heart disease, while there are others who think otherwise.

Experts from the Framingham Heart Study have determined that high blood cholesterol is one of the factors for a coronary heart disease or CHD.



The result of their study showed that someone with a higher cholesterol level is more likely to have coronary heart disease or CHD.

Coronary heart disease is unusual at low cholesterol levels.

A connection between high blood cholesterol and heart disease was also confirmed by another group of experts.

Their studies showed that lowering the total LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) levels drastically reduces coronary heart disease.



Recently, a series of trials of cholesterol using statin drugs showed that lowering the total cholesterol and LDL-cholesterol greatly reduces the chance of experiencing a heart attack, angioplasty (a bypass that requires surgery) and dying of coronary heart disease-related causes.

## **What are the risk factors that increase the risk of developing heart disease?**

The risk factors are the conditions that someone has. Even though some risk factors can be modified some risk factors cannot be changed.



All in all, the more risk factors that you have the more chances you will be experiencing heart disease.

## Here Are Some Of The Risk Factors That Can't Be Changed:

- **Age** (55 and above for a female while 45 and above for a male)
- **Family history** (parents or sibling who died of a heart disease at the age stated above)



## Here Are Some Known Risk Factors That Can Be Changed:

- **High total cholesterol and high LDL**  
(bad) cholesterol
  - **Low HDL** (good) cholesterol
    - **Smoking**
    - **High blood pressure**
- **Diabetes** (the risk of developing a heart disease is high if you are diabetic)
  - **Physical inactivity**



- **Obesity** or being overweight

**It is advisable to go see a physician if you are not sure if you have a high blood cholesterol.**

Although some experts agree that high blood cholesterol and heart disease is somewhat connected; there are also a few experts who tend to disagree, and say, too much animal fat or high cholesterol, and heart disease go together.

They argued that there is no such thing as “bad” or “good” cholesterol.



They believe that mental stress, physical activity and change of body weight may influence the level of the blood cholesterol and that a high blood cholesterol is not dangerous but only reflects an unhealthy condition.

**There are a lot of factors that cause high cholesterol and heart disease. The only sure thing is... to live a healthy life.**

## **Cholesterol & The Effects On Men & Women**

There are some people who deny there are differences between the sexes when it comes to cholesterol.



You will find in research the differences between men and women, so that you can determine how cholesterol affects you.

Men and women have different hormones and cholesterol also works in a different way. When you do the proper research, you can learn about the differences.

Men are less likely to care about what they eat, but they are less likely to exercise for the benefit of being healthier, they tend to exercise to look better for the other sex.

They are also a lot less likely to go to the doctor for a problem that could be serious.



For these reasons men run a higher risk of having high cholesterol at an earlier age.

It may be obvious but women are more likely to be healthier with their lifestyles. However, this doesn't mean that they are not at risk for having high cholesterol or avoiding heart disease.

Did you know that women are less likely to respond quickly to a heart attack than men?

**Even though many women think that breast cancer is the top health risk for their gender, this is actually not true, it is actually heart disease.**



There are so many women who believe that they need to worry about breast cancer, but they really should think about their chances of having a heart attack.

This is why drastically higher numbers of women die of their first heart attack when compared to the number of male fatalities for the same reason.

Even though men and women are very different, you will find that there is one thing that both of the sexes have in common and that is being able to change the future.



**Yes, it's true you can change your future by starting to become healthy and maintaining a healthy cholesterol level.**

You will find that if you start yourself on a diet that will limit your (bad) fat intake, you may be able to save yourself from a heart attack.

You will find that there are saturated fats, sugars, and alcohol that you are going to have to avoid in order to decrease your cholesterol, however, remember that the body does need some fats and sugars for it to perform. You will want to do everything that you can to stay active and also maintain a healthy life.



You will find that you can control your weight and with that you will be able to increase your good cholesterol, but you will also be able to decrease the bad cholesterol.

You may also want to take some fiber supplements so that you can keep your cholesterol levels just right and you'll be able to dispose of the bad cholesterol before it enters your blood stream.

**There are so many things that you can do to keep your cholesterol under control, but you will want to consult your doctor about what is best for you.**



# Cholesterol Diet. A Guide To Good Eating Habits.

Are you gaining weight? Does this make you worry about your cholesterol level? Do you feel like you need to do something about your eating habits particularly your cholesterol diet?

Good idea... Unhealthy cholesterol levels like hypertension, does not exhibit symptoms until complications like serious heart disease resulting in heart attacks occur. Lowering cholesterol with medications have been found out to be effective.



However, a lifestyle change that would include a good cholesterol diet as a first step would work best.

**Drugs as lone solutions to lowering a person's cholesterol level may not be as efficient as when it is coupled with some physical activities and a better cholesterol diet.**

These are very essential partners.

Regardless of the fact that fat is a major source of energy in the body; it is also not the only source. Too much fat in a person's diet can increase the blood cholesterol levels resulting in heart attack.



However, fat content is not a good gauge of a food's cholesterol content. Liver and other organ meats may be low in fat but have high cholesterol content.

## Here Are Some Suggestions On Cholesterol Diet Approaches;

- **Taking fiber-rich foods** such as whole grains as you primary source of carbohydrates. This should go hand in hand with an increase intake of fresh fruits and vegetables such as berries, oranges, apples, pears, grapes, bell peppers, broccoli, kale, cauliflower, tomatoes, dark leafy greens celery, squash and eggplant among others.



- **Staying away from saturated fats** which are mostly found in animal foods such as meat, poultry and dairy products is a good cholesterol diet.

Opt for unsaturated fats instead, specifically omega-3 fatty. Good sources of these would be the vegetable and fish oils.

- **Source your protein from soy protein, poultry, and fish** instead of meat.
- **Major lifestyle change** as a part of cholesterol diet would mean weight control, exercise, and quitting smoking.



It usually takes a healthy cholesterol diet three to six months to show any change in your cholesterol level.

Some patients though, have seen results in about four weeks. While a cholesterol diet is a good way to start a lifestyle change towards a healthier heart, keep in mind that proper exercise is as vital.

Inactivity is believed to be one of the four primary causes of coronary heart disease.

The three others are smoking, unhealthy cholesterol, and high blood pressure.



Even with a newly-acquired low cholesterol diet and some learned simple exercises, you may want to think hard before lighting another one of those cigarette sticks!

**There are many ways for you to turn your health around. Find out more in the GHE Membership area.**



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