

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



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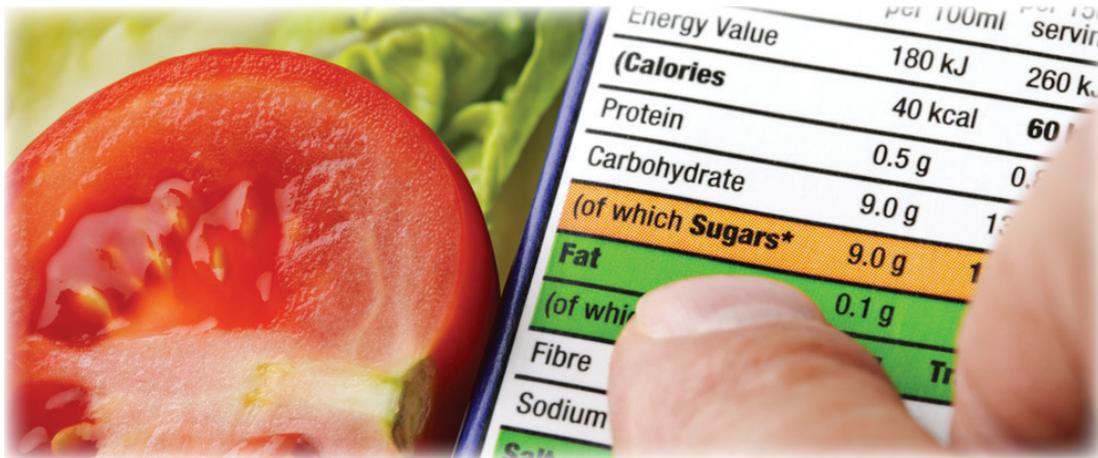
Do you have high cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a silent health risk that can be deadly. Here is what you should know about good and bad cholesterol – and your heart disease risks. Have you been diagnosed with high cholesterol? Is lowering your cholesterol a goal? The first step is to find out: What is cholesterol?

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance made in the liver and other cells and found in certain foods, such as food from animals, like dairy products, eggs, and meat.

The body needs some cholesterol in order to function properly. Its cell walls, or membranes, need cholesterol in order to produce hormones, vitamin D, and the bile acids that help to digest fat. But the body needs only a limited amount of cholesterol to meet its needs.

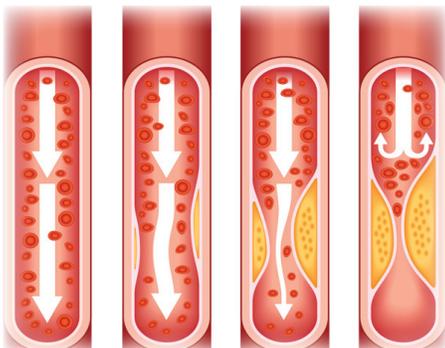


When too much is present, health problems such as heart disease may develop.

Why should you be concerned?

When too much cholesterol is present, plaque (a thick, hard deposit) may form in the body's arteries narrowing the space for blood to flow to the heart. Over time, this buildup causes atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) which can lead to heart disease.

When not enough oxygen-carrying blood reaches the heart, chest pain -- called angina -- can result. If the blood supply to a portion of the heart is completely cut off by total blockage of a coronary artery, the result is a heart attack. This is usually due to a sudden closure from a blood clot forming on top of a previous narrowing.



Types of Cholesterol

Cholesterol travels through the blood attached to a protein -- this cholesterol-protein package is called a lipoprotein. Lipoproteins are classified as high density, low density, or very low density, depending on how much protein there is in relation to fat.

- **Low density lipoproteins (LDL):** LDL, also called “bad” cholesterol, can cause buildup of plaque on the walls of arteries. The more LDL there is in the blood, the greater the risk of heart disease.
- **High density lipoproteins (HDL):** HDL, also called “good” cholesterol, helps the body get rid of bad cholesterol in the blood. The higher the level of HDL cholesterol, the better. If levels of HDL are

(Over)

Do you have high cholesterol? (Continued)

low, the risk of heart disease increases.

- **Very low density lipoproteins (VLDL):** VLDL is similar to LDL cholesterol in that it contains mostly fat and not much protein.
- **Triglycerides:** Triglycerides are another type of fat that is carried in the blood by very low density lipoproteins. Excess calories, alcohol, or sugar in the body are converted into triglycerides and stored in fat cells throughout the body. Serious reactions, such as trouble breathing or a fever of 104.5°F (40.3°C) or higher, are rare. If you or your child has an unusual reaction, call your doctor.

What Factors Affect Cholesterol Levels?

A variety of factors can affect cholesterol levels. They include:

- **Diet.** Saturated fat and cholesterol in the food you eat increase cholesterol levels.
- **Weight.** In addition to being a risk factor for heart disease, being overweight can also increase cholesterol.
- **Exercise.** Regular exercise can lower LDL cholesterol and raise HDL cholesterol.

How Can I Lower My Cholesterol and Risk of Heart Disease?

A few simple changes can help lower cholesterol and risk for heart disease:

Eat low-cholesterol foods. The American Heart Association rec-

ommends that you limit your average daily cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams. If you have heart disease, limit daily intake to less than 200 milligrams. People can significantly lower their dietary cholesterol intake by keeping their dietary intake of saturated fats low and by avoiding foods that are high in saturated fat and that contain substantial amounts of dietary cholesterol.

Quit smoking. Smoking lowers HDL (“good”) cholesterol levels. This trend can be reversed if you quit smoking.

Exercise. Exercise increases HDL cholesterol in some people. Even moderate-intensity activities, if done daily, can help control weight, diabetes, and high blood pressure -- all risk factors for heart disease.

Source: webmd.com

Benefits Corner

Reminder: CHP Membership Renewal Meeting 2014 is **September 19, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.**

If you currently are utilizing specialty drugs, you may see a change in the specialty pharmacy name. Curascript, which is the Express Scripts’ specialty pharmacy that CHP members may utilize for specialty drugs, merged with Medco’s Accredo Specialty Pharmacy, therefore they have combined and will operate under the Accredo brand name and license. Starting September 1, 2013, Curascript will be renamed as Accredo.

Change Members will see;

- The Accredo name and label will be on their drug shipments and pharmacy letters
- Longer pharmacy hours- Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET, Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET
- Upgraded assessments to include therapy-specific questions for better adherence
- When members get refill reminder automated calls, they will have the added choice to connect with customer service

What will stay the same:

- Same Customer Service phone number; 800-870-6419
- Same Order Process
- Same Order Delivery Time
- Same Payment Procedure