What do you know about Cholesterol?

Join WHF in observing September 2013 as Cholesterol Education Month.

Cholesterol is a soft, waxy substance found among the lipids (fats) in the bloodstream and in all the body’s cells. There are several kinds, but the most important are low-density lipoprotein (LDL or “bad”) and high-density lipoprotein (HDL or “good”). Too much LDL cholesterol can increase risk for heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases.

What Can Cholesterol Do?

High cholesterol is one of the major controllable risk factors for coronary heart disease, heart attack and stroke. As your blood cholesterol rises, so does your risk of coronary heart disease. If you have other risk factors (such as high blood pressure or diabetes) as well as high cholesterol, this risk increases even more. The more risk factors you have, the greater your chance of developing coronary heart disease. Also, the greater the level of each risk factor, the more that factor affects your overall risk.

When too much LDL (bad) cholesterol circulates in the blood, it can slowly build up in the inner walls of the arteries that feed the heart and brain (View an animation of cholesterol by clicking the link on page 3). Together with other substances, it can form plaque, a thick, hard deposit that can narrow the arteries and make them less flexible. This condition is known as atherosclerosis. If a clot forms and blocks a narrowed artery, a heart attack or stroke can result.

High blood cholesterol: As blood cholesterol rises, so does risk of coronary heart disease. When other risk factors (such as high blood pressure and tobacco smoke) are present, this risk increases even more. Your cholesterol level can be affected by your age, gender, family health history and diet.

Excerpt from American Heart Association, HTTP://WWW.HEART.ORG

WHF’s complete 32-level Chemistry Profile offers a comprehensive look at your LDL, HDL, and total cholesterol levels. Visit with us today!
Wondering what natural remedies are available to improve your cholesterol levels? Taking small, simple steps along your path can greatly affect your health. The Mayo Clinic staff has compiled several all-natural tips to help you and your numbers.

**Lifestyle and home remedies**

Lifestyle changes are essential to improve your cholesterol level. To bring your numbers down, lose excess weight, eat healthy foods and increase your physical activity. If you smoke, quit.

**Lose extra pounds**

Excess weight contributes to high cholesterol. Losing even 5 to 10 pounds can help lower total cholesterol levels. Start by taking an honest look at your eating habits and daily routine. Consider your challenges to weight loss — and ways to overcome them. Set long-term, sustainable goals.

**Eat heart-healthy foods**

What you eat has a direct impact on your cholesterol level. In fact, a diet rich in fiber and other cholesterol-lowering foods may help lower cholesterol as much as statin medication for some people.

**Choose healthier fats.**

Saturated fat and trans fat raise your total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol. Get no more than 10 percent of your daily calories from saturated fat. Monounsaturated fat — found in olive, peanut and canola oils — is a healthier option. Almonds and walnuts are other sources of healthy fat.

Eliminate trans fats. Trans fats, which are often found in margarines and commercially baked cookies, crackers and snack cakes, are particularly bad for your cholesterol levels. Not only do trans fats increase your total LDL (“bad”) cholesterol, but they also lower your HDL (“good”) cholesterol.

You may have noticed more food labels now market their products as “trans fat-free.” But don’t rely only on this label. In the United States, if a food contains less than 0.5 grams of trans fat a serving, it can be marked trans fat-free. It may not seem like much, but if you eat a lot of foods with a small amount of trans fat, it can add up quickly. Instead, read the ingredients list. If a food contains a partially hydrogenated oil, that’s a trans fat, and you should look for an alternative.

**Limit your dietary cholesterol.**

Aim for no more than 300 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol a day — or less than 200 mg if you have heart disease. The most concentrated sources of cholesterol include organ meats, egg yolks and whole milk products. Use lean cuts of meat, egg substitutes and skim milk instead.

Select whole grains. Various nutrients found in whole grains promote heart health. Choose whole-grain breads, whole-wheat pasta, whole-wheat flour and brown rice. Oatmeal and oat bran are other good choices.

Stock up on fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are rich in dietary fiber, which can help lower cholesterol.

Snack on seasonal fruits. Experiment with vegetable-based casseroles, soups and stir-fries.

Eat heart-healthy fish. Some types of fish — such as cod, tuna and halibut — have less total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.

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**~ Tammy’s Corner ~**

As we approach this Fall season, don’t forget to participate in the WOW wellness program! The deadline is December 31, 2013 to complete 3 simple steps and receive cash incentives totaling $125! Visit [HTTP://WOW.WHF.TO](http://WOW.WHF.TO) for all the details!

Wyoming On Wellness
than do meat and poultry. Salmon, mackerel and herring are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which help promote heart health.

**Drink alcohol only in moderation.**

Moderate use of alcohol may increase your levels of HDL cholesterol — but the benefits aren’t strong enough to recommend alcohol for anyone who doesn’t drink already. If you choose to drink, do so in moderation. This means no more than one drink a day for women and one to two drinks a day for men. **Exercise regularly**

Regular exercise can help improve your cholesterol levels. With your doctor’s OK, work up to 30 to 60 minutes of exercise a day. Take a brisk daily walk, Ride your bike. Swim laps. To maintain your motivation, keep it fun. Find an exercise buddy or join an exercise group. And, you don’t need to get all 30 to 60 minutes in one exercise session. If you can squeeze in three to six 10-minute intervals of exercise, you’ll still get some cholesterol-lowering benefits.

**Don’t smoke.**

If you smoke, stop. Quitting can improve your HDL cholesterol level. And the benefits don’t end there. Just 20 minutes after quitting, your blood pressure decreases. Within 24 hours, your risk of a heart attack decreases. Within one year, your risk of heart disease is half that of a smoker’s. Within 15 years, your risk of heart disease is similar to that of someone who’s never smoked.

Excerpt from the Mayo Clinic staff

**Watch, Learn, and Live**

*about cholesterol with the Interactive Cardiovascular Library by the American Heart Association.*

http://watchlearnlive.heart.org/cvml_player.php?moduleSelect=chlsr

Your smartphone can be a powerful tool to aid you on your Journey to Well-Being!

Here is a list of apps available for Android and iPhone devices to help you purchase and prepare the healthiest meals for your family.

**Fooducate** - Healthy Food Diet

**Dirty Dozen** - Keep those pesticides out of your bodies!

**Fast Food Nutrition** - Over 350 fast food joints nutritional info

**Restaurants Points Calculator Plus HD** - More than 250 restaurants’ worth of nutritional info

**Good Food Healthy Recipes** - BBC Worldwide presents more than 175 ideas for healthy eating with videos and tutorials.

**Food Planner and Groceries** - Planning your meals prevents resorting to unhealthy quick options.
Too-Good-To-Be-True Avocado Pudding
by Julie Weber, featured on MindBodyGreen.com

This chocolate avocado pudding is so good it's sinful. Except that it's not sinful at all. It's gluten free, sugar free and dairy free. No need for double boilers or whipping cream to make this rich and creamy dessert. This tasty delight is raw, healthy and incredibly easy.

I served this at a recent dinner party, and my guests were literally licking their bowls clean. Plus it has amazing health benefits. Yep, that's right. Delicious AND healthy! It's made with raw cacao powder, which is rich in antioxidants, and is a good source of dietary fiber and magnesium. The good fat in the avocados carries a long list of health benefits that help your heart, your eyes, your skin, your digestion and your blood pressure.

So go on... dig in!

Serves 2

**INGREDIENTS:**
1 ripe avocado, peeled + quartered
1/4 cup cacao powder
1/4 cup raw honey (NOTE: If you choose not to eat honey, substitute with your favorite natural vegan sweetener)
1/4 cup almond milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Berries and mint for garnish

**DIRECTIONS:**
Put all the ingredients in blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Transfer the pudding to individual ramekins, top with fresh fruit and/or a sprig of mint, serve and enjoy!

Looking for healthier local options?
Here are two suggestions to help you discover what resources are near you from local farmers markets to independent growers.

[HTTP://WWW.LOCALHARVEST.ORG](HTTP://WWW.LOCALHARVEST.ORG)

[HTTP://WWW.WYOMINGBUSINESS.ORG/FARMERSMARKETS](HTTP://WWW.WYOMINGBUSINESS.ORG/FARMERSMARKETS)

WHF does not endorse the products, services or websites listed herein; but rather gently offers suggestions to help you better yourself, always moving forward on your Journey toward overall Well-Being.