



## Healthy Cholesterol Levels

High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease, heart attack and stroke. The American Heart Association recommends that all adults age 20 or older have their cholesterol levels tested with a fasting lipoprotein profile. It's a simple blood test that is done after a nine- to 12-hour fast.

To reduce your risk for heart disease, aim for these numbers:

- Total cholesterol: **200 or less**
- HDL ("good") cholesterol: **60 and above**
- LDL cholesterol: **100 or less**
- Triglycerides: **150 or less**
- Blood pressure: **120/80 or less**

Triglycerides are the most common type of fat in your body. They come from food, and your body also makes them. Factors that can contribute to elevated triglycerides levels include:

- Overweight or obesity
- Insulin resistance or metabolic syndrome
- Diabetes mellitus
- Alcohol consumption, especially in excess
- Excess sugar intake, especially from sugary drinks
- Eating processed foods
- High saturated fat intake
- Hypothyroidism
- Chronic kidney disease
- Physical inactivity
- Inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, or lupus



### Numbers too high?

You can improve your cholesterol levels and reduce your risk for heart disease by quitting smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, and getting more active. Talk to your doctor about exercise and other steps you can take to lower your cholesterol.

Source: American Heart Association – Health Topics - Cholesterol



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