



# MANAGE MY CHOLESTEROL

## Cholesterol

is a fatty substance found in the blood. Cholesterol plays an essential role in how every cell in the body works. However, too much cholesterol in your blood can increase your risk of heart problems and is considered a 'marker' for coronary heart disease risk.

## LDL and HDL cholesterol

Cholesterol is carried around the body by proteins. These combinations of cholesterol and proteins are called lipoproteins. There are two main types of lipoproteins:



Having too much harmful cholesterol in your blood can increase your risk of getting cardiovascular disease. The risk is particularly high if you have a high level of LDL cholesterol and a low level of HDL cholesterol.

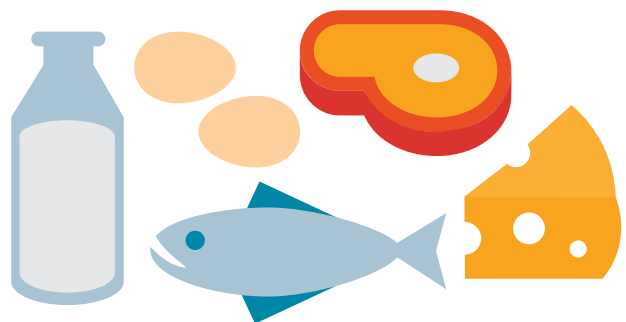


## What causes high cholesterol?

A common cause of high blood cholesterol levels is eating too much saturated fat. Saturated fats are found in foods such as dairy products, meat and cooking oils as well as a lot of processed foods and ready-made meals. However, some people have high blood cholesterol even though they eat a healthy diet – for example they may have inherited a condition called familial hyperlipidaemia – a condition where there is an abnormally high concentration of fats present in the blood.

The cholesterol that is found in some foods such as eggs, liver, kidneys and some types of seafood (e.g. prawns), does NOT usually make a great contribution to the level of cholesterol in your blood. It is much more important that you focus on eating foods that are low in saturated fat.

## Cholesterol sources



BEEF

72 mg/100g

PORK

70 mg/100g

CHICKEN

64 mg/100g

FISH

70 mg/100g

EGG

373 mg/100g



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## Reduce your cholesterol level & prevent raised cholesterol

### Exercise

A regular exercise programme, at the recommended level of 3.5 hours or more per week, can help increase your HDL cholesterol level – the protective type of cholesterol. If you have a high cholesterol level your GP will advise you to exercise more regularly.



### Cut down on saturated fats

To help to reduce your cholesterol level, or to help prevent it from rising, you need to cut down on saturated and trans fats and replace them with monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats. You should also reduce the total amount of fat you eat.



Replace butter, lard and ghee with small amounts of unsaturated fats such as olive, rapeseed, sunflower or corn oils.



Trim all visible skin and fat off meats.



Keep pastries, pies, sausage rolls and processed foods for every now and then.



Spread margarines thinly and go for lower fat spreads with the least amount of saturates – choose those that mainly contain monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats



Beware of sauces that are oil or cheese based; they can add a lot of fat to an otherwise healthy meal.



Be careful about how much oil you actually use in cooking and for dressings – measure it out.



Grill, bake, steam, boil or poach foods instead of frying or roasting.