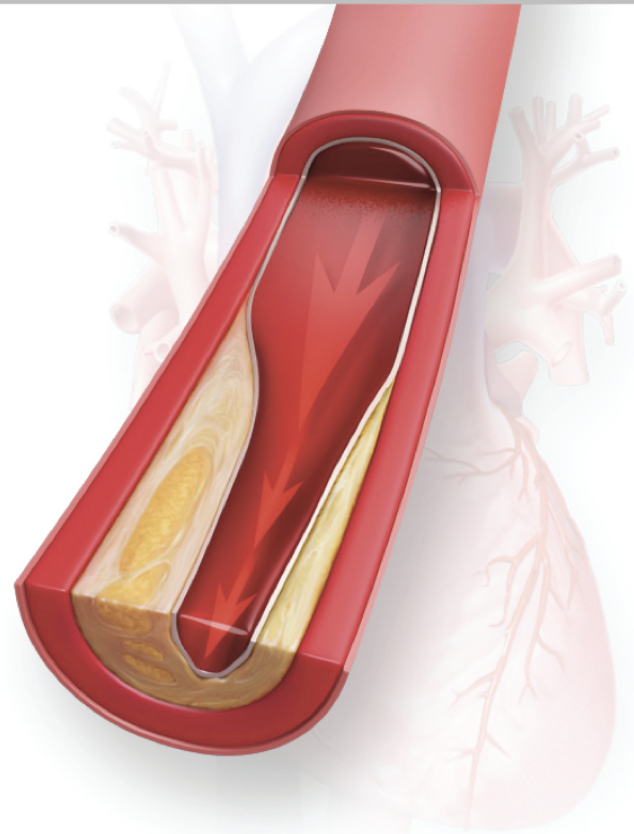


How Can I Improve My Cholesterol?

Most heart and blood vessel disease is caused by a buildup of cholesterol, plaque and other fatty deposits in artery walls. The arteries that feed the heart can become so clogged the blood flow is reduced, causing chest pain. If a blood clot forms and blocks the artery, a heart attack can occur. If a blood clot blocks an artery leading to or in the brain, a stroke results.

You can make lifestyle changes to improve your cholesterol. You can eat heart-healthy foods, reach and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and not smoke. Some people also need to take medicine.

Your doctor can help you create a plan to improve your cholesterol. It's important to follow your plan and discuss any concerns you have with your doctor.



Cholesterol can join with fats and other substances in your blood to build up in the inner walls of your arteries. The arteries can become clogged and narrow, and blood flow is reduced.

What should I eat?

Focus on foods low in saturated and trans fats such as:

- A variety of fruits and vegetables.
- A variety of whole grain foods such as whole-grain bread, cereal, pasta and brown rice. At least half of the servings should be whole grains.
- Fat-free, 1% and low-fat milk products.
- Skinless poultry and lean meats. When you choose to eat red meat and pork, select options labeled "loin" and "round." These cuts usually have the least amount of fat.
- Fatty fish such as salmon, trout, albacore tuna and sardines. Enjoy at least 8 ounces of non-fried fish each week.
- Unsalted nuts, seeds, and legumes (dried beans or peas).
- Nontropical vegetable oils like canola, corn, olive, or safflower oils.

What should I limit?

- Foods with a lot of sodium (salt)
- Sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages
- Red meats and fatty meats that aren't trimmed
- Processed meats such as bologna, salami and sausage
- Full-fat dairy products such as whole milk, cream, ice cream, butter and cheese
- Baked goods made with saturated and trans fats such as donuts, cakes and cookies
- Foods that list the words "hydrogenated oils" in the ingredients panel
- Saturated oils like coconut oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil
- Solid fats like shortening, stick margarine and lard
- Fried foods