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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 2011

Reprinted by:
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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: CHOLESTEROL

When you think of your cholesterol level you may think of some of the foods that you eat. Cholesterol can be found in foods such as eggs, milk, butter, cheese, and fatty meats. But did you know that cholesterol is also made in your body? The body makes cholesterol in the liver and it is carried through the body by the blood. If your body has high levels of cholesterol over a long period of time, it is possible that your blood vessels may get blocked. Also, having high levels of cholesterol over time raises the chances of having a heart attack or stroke. It is important to know your cholesterol level.

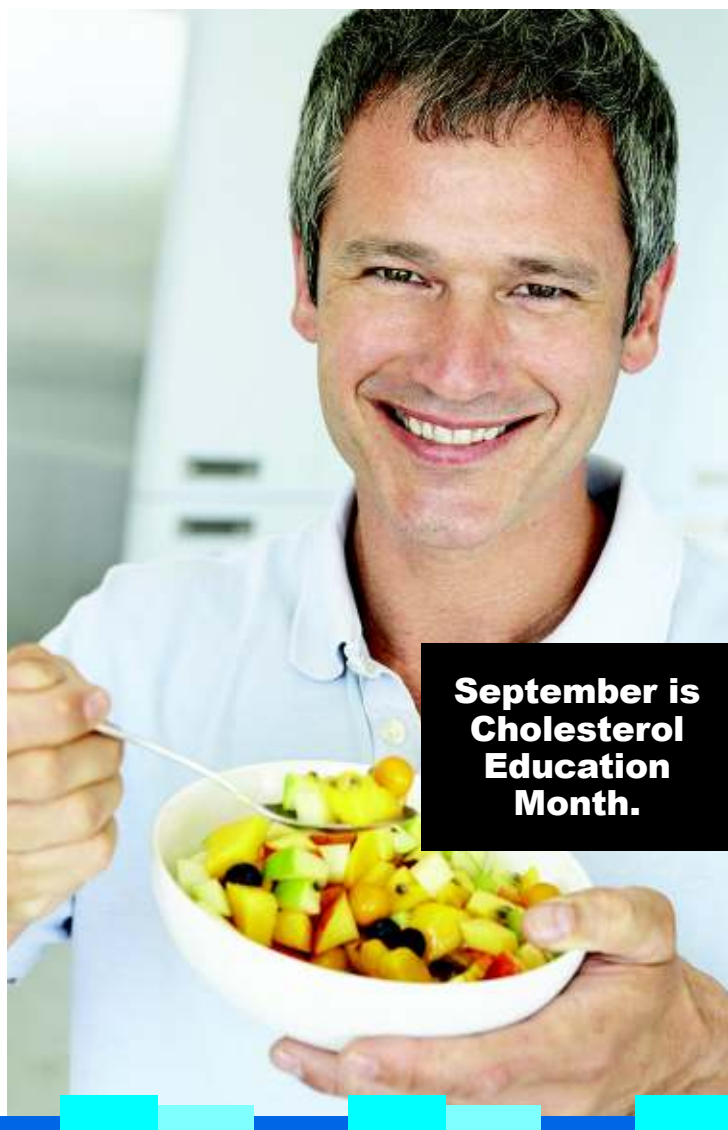
There are two types of cholesterol

There are two kinds of cholesterol in the body:

HDL or high-density lipoproteins — this kind is often called “good” cholesterol. The HDL travels around the body and picks up other cholesterol and brings it back to the liver.

LDL or low-density lipoproteins — this is often called the “bad” cholesterol. The LDL takes cholesterol to different parts of the body. It could also cause a blockage in your blood vessel.

Continued on the back →



**September is
Cholesterol
Education
Month.**

To learn more about your cholesterol, talk to your healthcare provider.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

When should you check your cholesterol levels?

A blood test is done to check how much cholesterol is in your blood. Many doctors recommend a test for adults 20 years of age and older. Sometimes, a test is suggested for children if there is a family history of heart disease. However, it is very important for men over 35 years of age and women over 45 years of age to have a cholesterol check. If there is a healthy level of cholesterol, it is often tested in another year. If not, your healthcare provider may ask you to come in and test your cholesterol level more often.

What should my cholesterol level be?

The blood test that checks cholesterol looks at your total cholesterol level, your HDL level and your LDL level. Total cholesterol levels should be below 200. If your total cholesterol is above 240 you should talk to your healthcare provider for ways to lower it. For both the HDL and LDL levels, each person has a different level of each. You and your healthcare provider should come up with a goal for your LDL level.

What makes my cholesterol high or low?

There are many reasons why a person's cholesterol is high or low. These are some of the common influences on the cholesterol level.

Family History — High cholesterol levels often run in families. If your family has a high cholesterol history, even though you may watch your diet and weight, you may still have high cholesterol. If your family has a history of high cholesterol talk to your healthcare provider.

Diet — You want to eat MORE fruits, vegetables, chicken and fish. You also want to eat lower fat foods and leaner meats.

Weight — you want to keep your weight at a healthy level. Talk to your healthcare provider about what a healthy weight would be for you.

Exercise — Keep moving! Even small amounts of exercise can help with managing your cholesterol levels. There are many different types of activities available. Talk to your healthcare provider about ways that you can be more active.



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