

## Improving Your Lipid (Cholesterol) Level

This handout explains the types of cholesterol (or “lipids”) and how to lower your levels. Managing your cholesterol will help to prevent heart attacks, strokes, and blocked arteries in your body.

### Types of Cholesterol

#### Total Cholesterol

This is the combined amount of LDL and HDL cholesterol. This is not used by itself to predict heart disease risk.

#### LDL

Also known as low-density lipoprotein. This is “bad” cholesterol. It builds up in the arteries of the body. To lower your LDL level:

- Take your medicines
- Eat foods low in saturated fat, trans-fat, and cholesterol

#### HDL

Also known as high-density lipoprotein. This is “good” cholesterol. To increase your HDL level:

- Take your medicines
- Exercise
- Lose weight
- Stop smoking

#### Triglycerides

This is a form of fat. It comes from food and is made by the body. To lower your triglycerides:

- Exercise
- Lose weight
- Manage your blood sugar levels

### Other Ways to Lower Lipid Levels

Decrease your intake of simple sugars, starches, alcohol, and saturated fats. Replace these types of food with whole grains and unsaturated fats from plants and fish.

### Your Lipid Levels

Total Cholesterol: \_\_\_\_\_

Triglycerides: \_\_\_\_\_

HDL Cholesterol: \_\_\_\_\_

LDL Cholesterol \_\_\_\_\_

Goals for people <b>without</b> known heart or blood vessel disease			
	Best	Normal	High
Total Cholesterol	Less than 160	Less than 200	200 or higher
Triglycerides	Less than 100	Less than 150	150 or higher
LDL	Less than 100	Less than 130	130 or higher
HDL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men</li> <li>• Women</li> </ul>	-	45 or higher 55 or higher	-

Goals for people <b>with</b> heart and/or vascular disease (previous heart attack, stroke, clogged arteries, blood clots)			
	Best	Normal	High
Total Cholesterol	Less than 160	-	
Triglycerides	Less than 100	Less than 150	
LDL	Less than 70	Less than 100	
HDL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men</li> <li>• Women</li> </ul>		45 or higher 55 or higher	

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2025. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6196