

MANAGING YOUR CHOLESTEROL

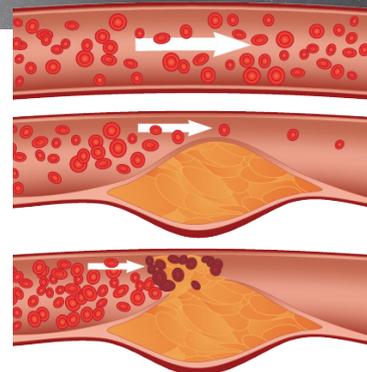


Why is high cholesterol a problem?

Cholesterol is a fat found in the blood. It's produced naturally in the body and is important for many body processes. Cholesterol is also found in some animal foods.

When cholesterol in the blood is too high it can accumulate in blood vessels and cause blockages. This increases the risk of developing heart disease.

There are good and bad cholesterol types and it's the bad cholesterol that needs to be managed.



What is a healthy cholesterol level?

Health authorities recommend that cholesterol levels should be less than 5.5mmol/L. However, if you are a smoker or have high blood pressure, you should be aiming much lower.

What causes high cholesterol levels?

As we get older, cholesterol may rise for many reasons. It may run in the family or it could be due to lifestyle factors.

Lifestyle factors:

- **Diet:** The cholesterol in food only has a small effect on the cholesterol in your blood. Rather, a diet low in fibre and high in saturated and/or trans fat is more likely to lead to high cholesterol levels.
- **Weight:** Being overweight can increase your risk of developing high cholesterol, particularly if your waist size is large.
- **Smoking:** Long-term smoking damages blood vessels allowing cholesterol to build up and form blockages.
- **Activity:** Low levels of physical activity reduces the good cholesterol and increases bad cholesterol.
- **Age:** As we get older the liver is not able to process and remove the bad cholesterol as effectively.
- **Diabetes:** High blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels and allow bad cholesterol to build up.
- **High blood pressure:** Restriction of the blood vessels means they are easily blocked by cholesterol build up.

Sometimes, you need more than diet and lifestyle to manage cholesterol. Continue to visit your doctor to discuss your options. This information is not meant to replace that provided by your doctor or dietitian. Any changes to your diet or lifestyle should be discussed with your health professional.



Do I have to give up eggs and seafood?

No. While eggs and seafood contain cholesterol, this is not converted to blood cholesterol. These foods are important sources of nutrients and good fats so you can still enjoy them on a cholesterol lowering diet. The recommendation is to have no more than seven eggs a week and you can still enjoy seafood several times a week provided it's not battered and fried.

What can I do to manage my cholesterol levels?

- Eat more plant foods such as vegetables, fruit, whole grains, nuts, seeds and beans. The fibre helps to lower cholesterol levels and antioxidants help protect the blood vessels from damage.
- Eat lean meat and chicken that are trimmed of fat. Eat fish several times a week. Limit your intake of processed or deli meats such as bacon and sausages.
- Limit full-fat dairy, cheese and butter. Choose nut butter, avocado or hummus as spreads. Don't cut out dairy altogether - it is an important source of calcium. If you choose dairy alternatives, make sure they are calcium-enriched.
- Limit fried foods and commercial baked goods that often contain high levels of saturated and/or trans fats. Choose foods with good fats such as olive oil, nuts, seeds, oily fish and avocado.
- Eat 2-3 g of plant sterols a day. These are found in small amounts in many plant foods, but there are foods that are enriched with plant sterols such as spreads, milk and specialised breakfast cereals.
- Give up smoking and limit alcohol consumption. Make water your drink of choice.
- Exercise regularly, including both weight-bearing and cardiovascular training. Maintain a healthy weight.

How do plant sterols lower cholesterol?

Plant sterols are very effective at lowering cholesterol by up to 9%¹. They work by stopping the body from absorbing bad cholesterol into the blood. It's not easy to get the 2g of sterols you need from regular plant foods, but foods with added plant sterols make it much easier.

References 1. Ras, et al. Br J Nutr. 2014. 112(2): 214-9.

Why choose Sultana Bran® + with Cholesterol Lowering Plant Sterols*?

- High in fibre and whole grains
- The recommended daily dose of 2g plant sterols in one serve
- Get your plant sterols at the start of the day and out of the way
- It's delicious when served with cold reduced fat milk or yoghurt.

*A 50g serve of Sultana Bran® + with Cholesterol Lowering Plant Sterols contains 2g plant sterols, which can reduce cholesterol as part of a healthy varied diet low in saturated fat. 2g plant sterols daily is required to help lower cholesterol. Additional consumption does not provide further benefit. May not be suitable for children under 5 years and pregnant or lactating women.

