

# HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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## National Cholesterol Education Month

### What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance found in your body and many foods. Your body needs cholesterol to function normally and makes all that you need. However, too much cholesterol can build up in your arteries. After a while, these deposits narrow your arteries, putting you at risk for heart disease and stroke.

### How do you know if your cholesterol is high?

High cholesterol usually doesn't have any symptoms. As a result, many people do not know that their cholesterol levels are too high. However, doctors can do a simple blood test to check your cholesterol. High cholesterol can be controlled through lifestyle changes or if it is not enough, through medications.

It's important to check your cholesterol levels. High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States.

A simple blood test called a lipoprotein profile can measure your total cholesterol levels, including LDL (low-density lipoprotein, or "bad" cholesterol), HDL (high-density lipoprotein, or "good" cholesterol), and triglycerides.

The following chart shows optimal lipid levels for adults:

#### Desirable Cholesterol Levels

<b>Total cholesterol</b>	Less than 200 mg/dL
<b>Low LDL ("bad") cholesterol</b>	Less than 100 mg/dL
<b>High HDL ("good") cholesterol</b>	40 mg/dL or higher
<b>Triglycerides</b>	Less than 150 mg/dL

### If you have high cholesterol, what can you do to lower it?

Your doctor may prescribe medications to treat your high cholesterol. In addition, you can lower your cholesterol levels through lifestyle changes:

- Low-fat and high-fiber food (Eat more fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and whole grains).
- For adults, getting at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate or 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous physical activity a week. For those aged 6-17, getting 1 hour or more of physical activity each day.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Don't smoke or quit if you smoke.

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## FOODS THAT WILL LOWER CHOLESTEROL

<b>Fatty fish</b> (salmon, tuna)	<b>Olive Oil</b>	<b>Whole grains</b>
<b>Berries</b>	<b>Avocados</b>	<b>Beans</b>
<b>Nuts</b>	<b>Dark Chocolate</b> (in moderation)	<b>Spinach</b>
<b>Red wine</b> (in moderation)	<b>Green and black teas</b>	<b>Soy</b>
<b>Citrus fruit</b>	<b>Vegetables</b>	

Sources: American Heart Association, Cleveland Clinic, American Journal of Clinical Medicine, University of California, Mayo Clinic, University of Maryland Medical Center, The National Center for Biotechnical Information, The Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Harvard Medical School, The Canadian Medical Association Journal.



Eat Better...Move More...It's Good for Life!



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## Top 10 Reasons to Eat More Fruits & Vegetables

With September being “More Matters Month” for fruits and veggies, it’s important to remember the many reasons we need to include them in our diet!!

10. **Color & Texture.** Fruits and veggies add color, texture...and appeal...to your plate.
9. **Convenience.** Fruits and veggies are nutritious in any form — fresh, frozen, canned, dried and 100% juice, so they’re ready when you are!
8. **Fiber.** Fruits and veggies provide fiber that helps fill you up and keeps your digestive system happy.
7. **Low in Calories.** Fruits and veggies are naturally low in calories.
6. **May Reduce Disease Risk.** Eating plenty of fruits and veggies may help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers.
5. **Vitamins & Minerals.** Fruits and veggies are rich in vitamins and minerals that help you feel healthy and energized.
4. **Variety.** Fruits and veggies are available in almost infinite variety...there’s always something new to try!
3. **Quick, Natural Snack.** Fruits and veggies are nature’s treat and easy to grab for a snack.
2. **Fun to Eat!** Some crunch, some squirt, some you peel...some you don’t, and some grow right in your own back yard!
1. **Fruits and Veggies are Nutritious AND Delicious!**

**Choose What’s “In Season”.** Choosing fresh fruits and vegetables that are “in season” means fresh and delicious! With fall quickly upon us, here is a list of some of the produce that will soon be available in local markets!

Acorn Squash	Hearts of Palm
Asian Pears	Kumquats
Belgian Endive	Muscadine Grapes
Broccoli	Passion Fruit
Brussels Sprouts	Pear
Butter Lettuce	Persimmons
Butternut Squash	Pineapple
Cactus Pear	Pomegranate
Cauliflower	Pumpkin
Cranberries	Sweet Potatoes
Date Plum	Swiss Chard
Endive	Turnips



More Really Does Matter!!

