

# Reduce your CHOLESTEROL

## LIFESTYLE CHANGES CAN HELP LOWER CHOLESTEROL

When a patient without heart disease is first diagnosed with elevated blood cholesterol, health care professionals advise a program of reduced dietary saturated fat and cholesterol, together with physical activity and weight control, as the primary treatment.

Eating a low-saturated-fat, low-cholesterol diet should help lower your LDL (bad cholesterol). If it's not lowered enough by reducing saturated fat and cholesterol, you can increase the amount of soluble fiber in your diet.

**REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF  
saturated fat & cholesterol  
IN YOUR DIET**

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY  
can help raise HDL  
and LOWER LDL**

Regular physical activity (30 minutes daily) can help raise HDL (good cholesterol) levels and lower LDL levels. This is especially important for individuals with high triglyceride and/or low HDL levels who are overweight with a large waist measurement.

Excess weight tends to increase your LDL levels. Losing this weight is not only important in lowering your LDL levels but is especially important for those with several risk factors, like low HDL levels or high triglyceride levels.

**LOSING WEIGHT  
can help  
LOWER LDL**

# how **STATINS** work

## THE MAIN GOAL OF CHOLESTEROL TREATMENT

is to lower LDL (bad cholesterol) levels. When diet and exercise are not enough to reduce cholesterol to goal levels, doctors often prescribe medication—the most prominent being statins. By interfering with the production of cholesterol, statin medications can slow the formation of plaques in the arteries.

Cholesterol plaques build up slowly, eventually resulting in blocked arteries (atherosclerosis), and reducing the flow of oxygen-rich blood to your heart. This can lead to heart disease.

**BAD CHOLESTEROL (LDL)**  
sticks to the arteries  
and **FORMS PLAQUE**

statins help  
**BLOCK PRODUCTION**  
of LDL in the liver

The body needs cholesterol to function, but sometimes, based on genetics, food intake, and activity, the body produces too much cholesterol. Statins block an enzyme that's key to the liver's production of cholesterol. This inhibits the liver's ability to produce cholesterol. The goal is less cholesterol in the bloodstream and a reduction in risk for high-cholesterol-related diseases.

### Resources

"High Blood Cholesterol: What you need to know"  
National Heart Blood and Lung Institute: [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

"Healthfinder"  
[www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

"About Cholesterol"  
American Heart Association: [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

"MedlinePlus"  
[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)

"Understanding Cholesterol: The Good, the Bad, and the Necessary"  
Harvard Health Publications  
[www.health.harvard.edu](http://www.health.harvard.edu)

