

The Links:

Dietary fats and cholesterol, blood cholesterol and heart disease

Unhealthy blood cholesterol contributes to heart-related problems including:

- heart attack
- stroke
- clogging of the arteries (atherosclerosis)
- high blood pressure

Blood cholesterol comes from cholesterol your body makes plus dietary cholesterol. Dietary cholesterol comes from animal foods such as eggs, regular milk products, meat and poultry.



Dietary cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol some, but not nearly as much as high fat foods, especially those high in saturated and trans fat.



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Blood Cholesterol:

What's healthy, what's not

There are different types of cholesterol in your blood. Some types are good for health, some are bad. Cholesterol becomes unhealthy when the different types are unbalanced. Here's what you need to know about blood cholesterol and heart health.

HDL-cholesterol: (High Density Lipoprotein) This is a good type of cholesterol linked to heart health.

LDL-cholesterol: (Low Density Lipoprotein) This is a bad type of cholesterol strongly associated with heart disease.

How to remember the difference between **HDL** and **LDL** Cholesterol:

HDL-cholesterol: Hauls excess cholesterol from the body so **H**igh levels are **H**ealthy.

LDL-cholesterol: Leaves plaque deposits on the artery walls (atherosclerosis) so keep this cholesterol as **L**ow as possible.

Triglycerides:

Another reason to choose healthy fats more often

Triglycerides are another type of fat found in the body. The fats you eat also affect blood triglyceride levels. Like LDL-cholesterol, high triglyceride levels are also linked to heart disease. For this reason they are usually tested at the same time as blood cholesterol levels.

Here are some simple steps to making healthy choices



Consume foods containing dietary cholesterol in moderation

How to

do it

- Shellfish is high in cholesterol but low in total fat, so it's okay to eat occasionally.
- Eggs are a nutritious food and like many foods, should be eaten in moderation. Since the cholesterol is only in the egg yolk mix extra egg whites with one whole egg when making omelets or baking.
- Avoid eating liver and other organ meats frequently.
- Keep overall fat intake low.

Fats and healthy eating

There are different types of fat in food. Some raise LDL-cholesterol, while others help to keep blood cholesterol levels healthy. For healthy eating, choose lower-fat foods more often and choose your fats wisely. Aim for more poly and monounsaturated fat, and less trans and saturated fat.

Follow a healthy eating plan

How to

do it

- Follow Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating, log on to www.hc-sc.gc.ca or call 1-800-OCANADA.
- Fill 3/4 of your plate with whole grain foods, vegetables, fruit or legumes.
- Round out your meal with a lower-fat milk choice and a smaller serving of lean meat, poultry or fish.
- Aim to eat fish at least 2-3 times a week.
- Above all else, stay away from high-fat snack foods, cookies, pastries, fried foods and most fast foods.

Fat:

How much fat should I eat each day?

A healthy eating pattern includes between 20-35% of your day's calories from fat.

- For a woman this means about 45-75 grams of fat a day
- For a man this means about 60-105 grams of fat a day

Use these numbers as a guideline to compare how much fat is in a food or recipe with how much fat you should eat each day.

It is important to consider the quality of fat as well as the quantity. Choose healthy fats more often (such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats) and limit your intake of saturated and trans fats.

Heart healthy shopping

Lower-fat, healthy eating begins in the grocery store with label reading. To help you make healthier choices, look on the label for:

- The Heart and Stroke Foundation Health Check™ logo
- An Information website such as www.healthcheck.org
- Nutrient claims such as "low-fat" or "trans fat-free"
- A new diet-related health claim such as "A diet low in saturated and trans fat may reduce the risk of heart disease. (Name of food) is low in saturated and trans fat"
- The Nutrition Facts table for facts on total fat, saturated and trans fat
- The ingredient list to find out the type of fat used in the product. Is it butter? Olive oil? Shortening?



To find more information on nutrition labels, log on to www.heartandstroke.ca/healthyliving

Which margarine should I buy?

Healthy margarine choices are easy to find. For regular or light products look for:

- Soft, non-hydrogenated margarines sold in tubs (not hard margarines)
- Margarine labels with the claim: "Low in saturated fat" (2 grams or less of saturated and trans fat)

Non-hydrogenated margarine contains no trans fat.



Dietary Fat and Cholesterol

Simple steps to making healthy choices



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Know Your Fats

Choose healthy fats more often (such as monounsaturated & polyunsaturated fats)

Types of Fat	Major Food Sources	Good Choice or Poor Choice
Healthy Fats		
Monounsaturated Fat/ Monounsaturates	Olive, canola and peanut oils, non-hydrogenated margarines, nuts, seeds and avocados	Good Choice
Polyunsaturated Fat/ Polyunsaturates	Safflower, sunflower and corn oils, non-hydrogenated margarines, nuts and seeds	Good Choice
• Omega-6 Fat		
• Omega-3 Fat	Fattier fish such as mackerel, herring, trout, salmon, swordfish, cod and bluefish Canola and soybean oils, flax seed, omega-3 eggs, walnuts, pecans and pine nuts	Good Choice
Unhealthy Fats		
Saturated Fat/ Saturates	Fatty meats, full-fat milk products, butter, lard, coconut, palm and palm kernel oils, fast foods, snack foods, many ready-prepared foods and those made with hydrogenated vegetable oil	Poor Choice
Trans Fat	All foods made with shortening or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, snack foods, fast foods and many ready-prepared foods	Poor Choice

Aim to use a little healthy fat every day.

Simple solutions

How to



Choose ...	Instead of ...
Soft, non-hydrogenated margarines	Butter, shortening or lard
Olive or canola oil for stir frying and sautéing	Butter, lard or bacon drippings Other oils
Salad dressings made with olive oil or canola oil	Rich, creamy dressings
Unsalted nuts, seeds, soy nuts for snacks*	Chips, cheesies and other high-fat, salty snack foods
Fish such as salmon, swordfish, mackerel and trout 2-3 times a week	Meat and poultry at every dinner
Walnuts or sesame seeds for a salad topping*	Croutons or real bacon
Lower-fat cookies, crackers and baked goods to limit trans fat intake	Higher-fat cookies, crackers and pastries which are high sources of trans fat
1% or 2% Evaporated milk to make creamy soups and chowders	Real cream

* While nuts and seeds provide a healthy type of fat, they are also high in calories and should be used in moderation.

What's moderation?

Check out our portion sizes chart at www.heartandstroke.ca/healthyliving



No time to cook from scratch?

An easy meal can be a healthy meal.

Consider these ready-prepared healthier choices. Look for the Health Check™ logo to help you make a healthy choice.



Item	Best Choice	Instead of...
Spreads and dips	Salsa, low-fat versions of hummus, roasted red pepper, tzatziki and soy dips	Creamy dips
Single-serving frozen entrees	Entrees with 10 grams of fat or less	Entrees with more than 10 grams of fat
Frozen burgers	Lean/extra lean beef, sirloin, veggie, chicken or turkey burgers	Full fat varieties of beef, sirloin, veggie, chicken or turkey burgers
Frozen entrees	Extra lean shepherd's pie, chicken pot pie with potato topping, boneless, skinless chicken breasts, pad thai	Pot pie made with pastry, breaded fish or fish wrapped in pastry, breaded chicken strips
Salads	Green salads – you add vinaigrette dressing	Ready-made pasta and potato salads with creamy dressings, Caesar salad
Desserts	Fresh fruit, oatmeal bars, low-fat ice cream, sherbet, frozen fruit bars or yogurt	Tarts, squares, pie, cheesecake, rich ice cream
Snacks	Low-fat popcorn, no-salt pretzels, cut up vegetables	Chips, cheesies and other high-fat, salty snack foods

Try recipes from Anne Lindsay's "The New Lighthearted Cookbook".

Visit our website at www.heartandstroke.ca or call 1-888-HSF-INFO (473-4636).

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