



Weill Cornell Medicine

Know Your Cholesterol Risk, Protect Your Heart



Good heart health requires controlling your cholesterol.

Here are the latest guidelines from the American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association.



Know Your Risk Factors

You're more likely to experience high cholesterol with risk factors, such as:



Diet high in saturated and trans fats



Obesity



Family history of high cholesterol



Smoking



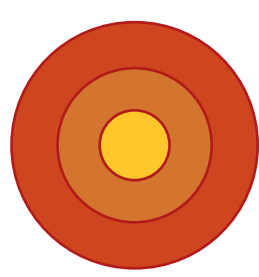
Lack of physical activity



Type 2 diabetes

Target LDL Cholesterol Levels

Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol is known as "bad" cholesterol because it puts you at risk for cardiovascular disease. To protect your heart, aim to keep your LDL levels low.



New targets depend on your risk of heart disease in the coming years.



LOW TO INTERMEDIATE RISK

Under
100 mg/dL

Generally healthy adults or those with certain risk factors, such as aging or mild high blood pressure

HIGH RISK

70 mg/dL
or lower

Individuals with diabetes, high blood pressure or a family history of early heart disease

VERY HIGH RISK

55 mg/dL
or lower

Adults who have already survived a heart attack or stroke or have established artery disease

Early Testing

Early testing can help you better understand your cardiovascular risk.



Advanced particle testing

High levels of lipoprotein (a) in your blood is associated with an increased risk of a heart attack or stroke, so it's wise to get tested at least once. If you have type 2 diabetes or other heart health risks, checking for apolipoprotein B can also be beneficial, as this protein is involved in plaque buildup in your blood vessels.



Non-contrast coronary artery calcium (CAC) scan

A non-contrast coronary artery calcium (CAC) scan is a valuable tool for detecting early calcium and plaque buildup in the heart's arteries. It is recommended for men 40+ and women 45+ with a borderline or intermediate 10-year risk of heart attack or stroke, as it helps inform decisions about statin therapy.

Early Treatment

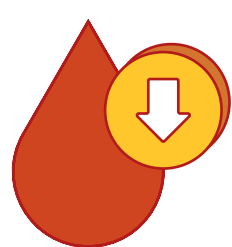
Regardless of your LDL cholesterol levels, new guidelines recommend starting cholesterol-lowering medication at age 40 if you have:

Diabetes

Human immunodeficiency virus

Stage 3 or 4 kidney disease

You can also work to lower your cholesterol through:



Diet. Avoid saturated and trans fats and eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, lean protein, fiber and whole grains.

Exercise. Spend at least 150 minutes a week walking, dancing, swimming, gardening or doing other moderate physical activity.

Sleep. Get seven to nine hours of sleep every night.

**Concerned about your cholesterol levels?
Find a doctor today: weillcornell.org/doctors**



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