

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACTIONS TO

MANAGE CHOLESTEROL

Your Heart, Body, and Cholesterol?

You may have wondered “what is cholesterol?” and it’s a great question! Cholesterol is a type of fat that we need in our bodies. We often hear of two kinds of cholesterol:

1. “Good” Cholesterol (aka HDL-High Density Lipoprotein): Removes other forms of cholesterol from your blood vessels, supporting blood to move more freely, and may reduce risk for heart attack and stroke.
2. “Bad” Cholesterol (aka LDL-Low Density Lipoprotein): Can block blood vessels, increasing our risk of heart attack or stroke by limiting blood flow.

How can I lower my Cholesterol?

Make small changes, in some cases as little as 10 minutes of physical activity a day is a great start for positive changes! Consider plant-based options, choose healthy fat foods, and acknowledging stress are a few ways to lower cholesterol.



There are many parts of our society that affect our health and lives that are beyond an individual's level of control. We want to acknowledge the social, political, economic, and environmental impacts to the health of the lands, waters, and forests, which in turn affects our health. We want you to know we are here to support you with your wellness goals and will meet you wherever you are at in your wellness journey.



MOVE YOUR BODY

Physical activity is medicine! Find ways to move that you enjoy or in places you enjoy like a park, trail, lakeside, or in your neighbourhood. Start with small changes, as little as 10 minutes and add to it. Go for a short walk on your lunch break, try chair exercises or a short exercise video at home. Take a walking call with a friend, a walking meeting, or find an activity buddy.



ACKNOWLEDGE STRESS

Acknowledge stress and its impact on cholesterol and your wellness! Connect to nature, water, culture, art, and family and friends. Sleep and eat well. Tap into your creativity, try meditation, breathing exercises, and ensure self-care with boundaries.



LIMIT ALCOHOL

If you drink, consider limiting your consumption to lower your health risk, as reducing your alcohol intake by any amount can improve your health. For healthy adults, 0-2 drinks per week is considered low-risk, 3-6 moderate risk, and 7+ per week is high-risk.



RESPECT TOBACCO

Even if you have been using commercial tobacco for many years, you can improve your health by quitting. Many people find success if they make a quit plan and gather supports. The First Nations Health Authority's (FNHA) website also has resources available, including a tobacco podcast series!



FOOD IS MEDICINE

Enjoy whole foods with fibre. Fibre helps grab extra cholesterol in your bowels and gets it out of your body through healthy bowel movements. Choose: whole-grains (whole-grain bread, brown rice, old-fashioned or steel cut oatmeal); all fruit including berries, apples, bananas, oranges; all vegetables especially non-starchy ones like wild greens, spring shoots, nettle, cauliflower, broccoli, salads, onion, tomato, peppers, celery, cucumber, spinach, carrots, beets, cabbage, garlic, ginger; nuts and seeds (peanut butter, sunflower seeds, walnuts); beans and lentils including rinsed canned or dried beans and lentils.



HEALTHY FAT FOODS

Choose foods with healthy fats: oolichan oil, olive oil, fish, nuts, seeds, avocado, and eggs.



PLANT-BASED OPTIONS

Choose more plant-based meals per week. Swap out the red meat for lentils, or the turkey soup for a bean soup or vegetarian chili.



LIMIT PROCESSED FOODS

Limit processed foods that are high in saturated fat, including: hot dogs, fast-food burgers, deli meats (ham, bologna, bacon), cookies, donuts, cakes, chips, french fries. Reduce butter and full-fat dairy (cheese, milk, ice cream, cream).

Where you can find more information and support



Connect with your doctor or community health nurse to receive ongoing support to take control of your cholesterol.



Learn more about nutrition for high cholesterol:
<http://nada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Healthy-Eating-For-High-Cholesterol.pdf>



Call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 to speak with a registered nurse, a Registered Dietitian, a qualified exercise professional or a pharmacist to discuss your cholesterol.