

Patient Information about High Cholesterol

<http://www.cardiologychannel.com/patient-information-high-cholesterol/index.shtml>

Cholesterol is a natural substance in the body and it has important functions. However, high cholesterol can affect cardiovascular health, lead to heart disease, and increase the risk for heart attack. Blood tests are used to measure levels of “good” cholesterol (HDL), “bad” cholesterol (LDL), and triglycerides.

Treatment for high cholesterol, also called hypercholesterolemia, usually involves lifestyle changes, such as adopting a daily exercise routine, eating a healthy diet, and avoiding high cholesterol foods. Medications called statins also may be recommended to help lower cholesterol.

Here are some questions to ask your physician (e.g., cardiologist) about high cholesterol. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and take it with you to your doctor appointments. The more knowledge you have about heart health and high cholesterol, the easier it will be to make important decisions concerning your medical care.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about High Cholesterol

- What is cholesterol? What are “good” cholesterol, “bad” cholesterol, and triglycerides?
- How does my cholesterol level compare to the target level? How do my HDL, LDL, and triglyceride levels compare to the target levels?
- What are the primary risks associated with my cholesterol levels?
- What other conditions can affect my risk for heart disease? How do other medical conditions affect my high cholesterol treatment plan?
- What do you suspect is the cause of my high cholesterol? Why do you suspect this cause?
- How often should my cholesterol level be tested?
- Do you recommend any additional diagnostic tests? Why or why not? If so, what do these tests involve?
- Should I see a specialist? If so, what type of heart specialist should I see?
Telephone number to call:

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about High Cholesterol Treatment

- What are the available treatment options for lowering my cholesterol?

- What are the benefits, risks, side effects, and possible complications associated with these treatments?
- What type of treatment for high cholesterol do you recommend? Why do you recommend this treatment?
- How will we know if this treatment is effective?
- How long might it take to reduce my cholesterol levels?
- Can you recommend any resources to help me change my diet?
Telephone number to call:
Support groups/Websites:
- Are there any foods or ingredients in food that I should avoid? If so, how can I tell if a particular food contains these ingredients?
- What types of exercise can help me lower my cholesterol level? How often should I exercise to lower my cholesterol?
- What are the different types of cholesterol-lowering medications?
- Which medication do you recommend? Why do you recommend this medicine?
- What are the most common side effects of this cholesterol drug?
- What side effects might indicate a serious reaction?
- What should I do if I experience serious side effects?
Telephone number to call:
- If this treatment is not effective, what other options are available?
- What are the risks and benefits of these other treatment options?

Notes/Additional Information