

High Cholesterol.

Everyone's body needs cholesterol, but too much can spell trouble for some people.

Cholesterol is a soft fat-like substance that aids vital bodily functions such as building new cells and producing hormones.

The body gets cholesterol in two ways:

- a. 80% of it is produced by the liver.
- b. Cholesterol is found in foods derived from animal products like meat, cheese, poultry, or fish.

There are four different types of lipoproteins that carry cholesterol in the blood:

- High density lipoprotein (HDL) or "good cholesterol"
- Low density lipoprotein (LDL) or "bad cholesterol"
- Very low density lipoproteins (VLDL), which are very bad forms of cholesterol.
- Chylomicrons, which carry very little cholesterol but a lot of another fat called triglycerides.

High levels of LDL -- the "bad cholesterol" -- are associated with increased risk of developing coronary heart disease; high levels of HDL -- or "good cholesterol" -- are associated with decreased risk.

LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) collects in the walls of arteries, initiating "hardening of the arteries" or atherosclerosis.

People with atherosclerosis are in turn vulnerable to heart disease, heart attack, stroke, and other problems caused by clogged blood vessels.

Cholesterol levels can increase with:

- Diets high in saturated fats, trans fats, and sugar
- Obesity
- A sedentary lifestyle

Ways to decrease Cholesterol

1. Medication
2. Diet
3. Exercise
4. Smoking Cessation
5. Alcohol Consumption in moderation
6. Weight Reduction