

OCTOBER WELLNESS:



KEEPING CHOLESTEROL LEVELS IN CHECK

It is important to keep cholesterol levels in check because high cholesterol can lead to increased risks of heart disease and heart attacks. There are some lifestyle changes that can be implemented to help lower cholesterol. In addition, these changes can help improve the effects of medications that lower cholesterol, if you are already taking them.

The 5 changes offered by the Mayo Clinic Staff are listed here. Note: Always check with your primary care provider before making changes to your eating habits or exercise routine.

1) ***Eat heart-healthy foods.***

- Decrease saturated fats.
- Eliminate trans fats.
- Eat foods high in omega-3 fatty acids.
- Eat foods with soluble fiber.
- Add whey protein.

2) ***Exercise on most days of the week and increase your physical activity.***

Moderate physical activity can improve cholesterol because it can increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL), which is also referred to as the “good” cholesterol. Talk to your doctor for clearance, and then work up to the recommended 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity, or 75 minutes per week of vigorous activity.

3) ***Quit smoking.***

Benefits to your heart health when you quit smoking include:

- Improved blood pressure and heart rate (within 20 minutes of quitting)
- Improved blood circulation and lung function (within 3 months of quitting)
- Decreased risk of heart disease, down to half that of a smoker (within one year of quitting)

4) ***Lose weight.***

Even a few extra pounds can increase cholesterol levels. To watch your weight, try to:

- Limit sugary drinks.
- Watch total daily calorie intakes.
- Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine (such as taking the stairs vs the elevator)

5) ***Drink alcohol only in moderation.***

If you drink alcohol, only drink in moderation. Too much alcohol consumption has been linked to serious health issues, including: high blood pressure, heart failure and strokes.

To reach the article from the Mayo Clinic, and learn more about each of these lifestyle changes, please click here: [Top 5 Lifestyle Changes to Improve Your Cholesterol](#)