



Wellness Works

A part of ISU Employee Wellness Program

September 2007

Announcements:

- Come join this month's Lunch and Learn presentation, Cholesterol: The good, the bad, and the ugly.
Location: Palmer, Room 0331 Ground Level
Time: 12 pm
- Watch for more information about the college-wide walking challenge beginning in October for ALL ISU employees. Registration will begin Sept 24-28.
- If you would like to receive the Wellness Works flyer via e-mail, please contact Sally Barclay at Barclay@iastate.edu

Cholesterol: Good and Bad

Cholesterol is a soft, fatty substance located in your bloodstream and all of your body's cells. It is an important part of having a healthy body because it aids in the production of cell membranes, hormones, and other bodily functions. Having too much cholesterol in your body, however, can be dangerous. It can stick to the walls of your arteries and can also put you at a higher risk for heart disease, heart attack and stroke.

Cholesterol is not dissolvable in blood and is made up of Low-density lipoproteins (LDL), High-density lipoproteins (HDL), and triglycerides. LDL cholesterol is known as "bad" cholesterol be-

cause it aids in the formation of plaque, a thick substance that can block your arteries (see photo below).

HDL cholesterol is known as "good" cholesterol because it carries the cholesterol away from the arteries back to the liver to be processed.

Another form of fat in the body are triglycerides. The body releases and burns these fats when it needs energy. But having too many triglycerides can also lead to the many health problems mentioned before.

Having high cholesterol is manageable, and you can reduce your chances of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke

by changing certain risk factors in your life such as smoking, lifestyle and physical activity.

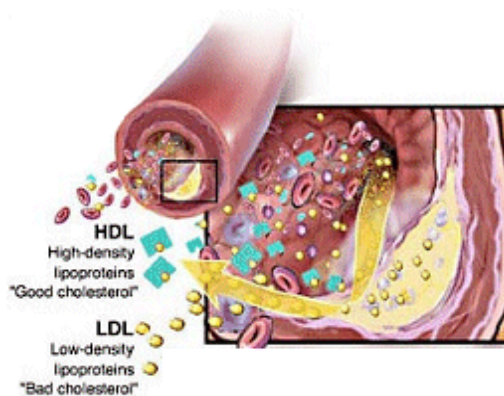
Since your body makes most of the cholesterol it needs, a diet high in saturated fats and trans fats raises your cholesterol levels tremendously. By keeping your intake of saturated fats low, you can increasingly lower the amount of cholesterol in your bloodstream.

Taking the proper steps to lower or maintain your cholesterol levels and decrease your risks of many health problems in the future. ❖

Counsel Your Children

If cholesterol were gold, we'd be the richest country in the world; much to our dismay, it is not. LDL cholesterol is the primary cause of atherosclerosis, which can lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Recent studies have shown that regular diet counseling can reduce cholesterol in children all the way up to fourteen years of age. Researchers in Finland studied 1,062 children, 540 of which received diet counseling, and the rest not receiving any. All of the 540 showed a reduction in blood cholesterol levels while the other group did not show any. Although the children counseled may have only showed small decreases at the current time, researchers say it will make a significant impact later on in their lives. This study measured the decrease of total cholesterol, not just LDL cholesterol.



Some of you may be asking "Isn't reducing HDL just as bad for children?" According to americanheart.org, no. Having high total cholesterol as a child can affect chances for atherosclerosis as an adult.

If having a professional counsel your family seems too extreme, parents can access information on healthy diets for their children (or for themselves) at, www.americanheart.org. ❖

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Exercise and Cholesterol

Exercise has been proven to have major health benefits, so it should be no surprise that it can also lower cholesterol levels. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that people who do not exercise are twice as likely to develop heart disease than those who are regularly physically active.

Exercise is involved in increasing the production and functioning of enzymes that improve the reverse cholesterol transport system, which transports cholesterol from peripheral tissues to the liver. (Durstine & Haskell 1994) It boosts HDL cholesterol levels while lowering triglycerides.

Biking, running and playing basketball, for example, are all effective ways to reduce your cholesterol level, but

studies have shown that the best way to decrease your cholesterol level is by simply walking. Walking three miles actually burns more fat than running the same distance in less time. (<http://www.all-about-lowering-cholesterol.com>)

Time is a major culprit as to why many people are sedentary. However, walking is simple and can be done anywhere at anytime. Here are some tips on how to be active walkers from the American Heart Association:

- **Go for short walks after meals; start with 5-10 minutes and work up to 30 minutes.**
- **Walk the dog instead of just letting it outside**

- **Walk around a building during work breaks**
- **Brainstorm project ideas with a co-worker while taking a walk**
- **When golfing, walk instead of renting a golf cart**
- **Get off the bus a few blocks early and walk the rest of the way home**
- **Buy new walking shoes to motivate yourself**
- **Wake up an extra 30 minutes to get a brisk walk to start your morning**

For more information visit, www.cholesterolldown.org/get_active/Exercise_Tips.html. ❖

Check Your Numbers...

Component	Healthy	Borderline	Unhealthy
Total Cholesterol	< 200	200 - 239	> 240
LDL	< 100	100 - 159	> 160
HDL	> 60	41 - 60	< 40
Triglycerides	< 150	150 - 199	> 200

Quick Fact:

High cholesterol has no symptoms, so the only way to know your cholesterol levels are by having them checked. See if your levels are within healthy range.

American Heart Association

Did You Know?

The first and most readily available way to protect your arteries is eating food that contains omega-3 fatty acids.

If you haven't heard about these yet just think one word, fish. Fish are jam-packed with omega-3 fatty acids. If you are not a huge fish eater, there are omega-3 supplements you can take. If that does not sound appetizing, a new study presented in the archives of Internal Medicine found that taking vitamin C and E together can reduce the risk of stroke and heart attack. These two vitamins have been the hot debate from researchers because some believe that they

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in oily fish like salmon and flaxseed and canola oils



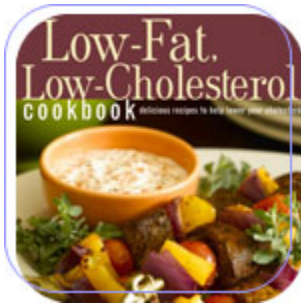
are not effective. This most recent study was of over 8,000 women whom were instructed to take the supplements in small amounts over nine years.

When the two vitamins were taken together, the risk of stroke was cut by 30 percent, and the risk of having a heart attack was cut by 21 percent. These findings show better results than most prescription drugs do.

It goes without saying, aside from eating these healthy foods and vitamins, regular exercise is a must in the fight to keep your arteries plaque free. ❖

Treat Yourself!

Brunswick Stew



Yield: Serves 6

Calories: 234
 Total Fat: 3.0 g
 Cholesterol: 44 mg
 Sodium: 123 mg
 Carbohydrates: 29 g
 Protein: 25 g
 Fiber: 6 g

Ingredients Shopping List

Vegetable oil spray
 1 tsp. olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, visible fat discarded
 1 1/2 c. fresh or frozen baby lima beans
 2 c. fresh or frozen whole-kernel corn
 3 c. fat-free, low sodium chicken broth
 1 1/2 c. chopped tomatoes
 6 oz. can no-salt added tomato paste
 3 tbs. fresh lemon
 1 tbs. very low sodium or low sodium Worcestershire sauce

Directions

Heat a deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Remove the skillet from the heat and lightly spray with vegetable oil spray (being careful not to spray near a gas flame). Pour the oil into the skillet and swirl to coat the bottom. Return the skillet to the heat and cook the onion for 3 minutes, or until tender.

Meanwhile, cut the chicken breasts into 1-inch cubes.

Stir the chicken and remaining ingredients into the skillet. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour.

This recipe is reprinted with permission from the *American Heart Association Low-Fat, Low-Cholesterol Cookbook, Third Edition*, Copyright © 2004 by the American Heart Association. Published by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, a division of Random House, Inc. Available from booksellers everywhere.

Challenge!

Challenge

To know my cholesterol numbers, including total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, and triglycerides.

To read food labels at the grocery store and to purchase primarily foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol.

To remain tobacco free, or if I smoke, pick a quit date and ask my health care provider for help with quitting.

To learn what my body mass index is, lose weight if overweight, or take measures to maintain a healthy weight.

To participate in physical activity of moderate intensity — like brisk walking — for at least 30 minutes on most or all days of the week. On days when I don't have time, I will do the activity in three, 10-minute segments during the day.