

# Cholesterol Screening Fact Sheet

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Today your cholesterol is \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions please call 645-7700, ext. 4249

## What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like, waxy substance found in the bloodstream and in all your body's cells. It's normal to have it. The body needs it to build cells, some hormones, and produce compounds that aid in fat digestion. But *too much* cholesterol increases a person's risk of developing heart disease.

Desirable total cholesterol level	less than 200 mg/dl
Borderline high total cholesterol level	200-239 mg/dl
High total cholesterol level	240 mg/dl or higher

## What is HDL cholesterol?

HDL stands for high density lipoprotein and it's called the "good" cholesterol because it prevents fatty build up by removing cholesterol from the arteries. The *higher your HDL "good" cholesterol levels are, the better.*

Protective HDL level	60 mg/dL or higher
Somewhat protective HDL level	40-59 mg/dL (higher the better)
Major risk factor for heart disease HDL level	Less than 40 mg/dL

## What is LDL cholesterol?

LDL stands for low density lipoprotein and it's called the "bad" cholesterol because it's the main source of cholesterol buildup and blockage in the arteries. *The lower your LDL "bad" cholesterol levels are, the better.*

Desirable LDL level	Less than 100 mg/dL
---------------------	---------------------

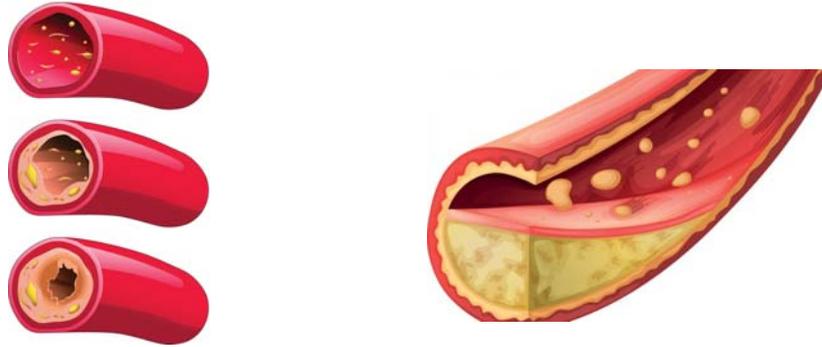
continued



Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson  
Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders  
Frank D. Formica, Chairman  
Patricia Diamond, Public Health Officer

# Cholesterol Screening Fact Sheet

(continued)



## What causes high cholesterol?

You can get high cholesterol, also called **hypercholesterolemia**, in two ways, genetic or environmental. A person's gender, age, and having a family history of high cholesterol are things that can not change and can cause high cholesterol. Unhealthy lifestyle choices including poor diet, lack of exercise, obesity, and tobacco smoking can also increase the amount of cholesterol in the blood. These are things you can change. Cholesterol is mainly found in animal products that you eat like red meats, poultry, fish, eggs, butter, cheese and whole milk. Limit saturated fat (animal products), avoid trans fat (junk food), and choose healthy unsaturated fats (oils) to keep your cholesterol under control. Eat more fruits, vegetables, and grains and be regularly active to help lose or maintain weight.

## What are the dangers of high cholesterol?

High levels of cholesterol in the blood is a major risk for coronary heart disease, which is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. It's also a risk factor for stroke, aortic aneurysm, and high blood pressure. High cholesterol has no symptoms. The only way to know if you have high cholesterol is to have a simple blood test.

## How is high cholesterol treated?

Treatment for high cholesterol may require making permanent lifestyle changes, such as following an eating plan low in saturated fat and trans fat, and high in fruits, vegetables, and grains, as well as increasing your daily physical activity. If after these changes are made your cholesterol levels remain the same, your health care provider may prescribe medication together with healthy lifestyle changes.

\*For more information visit:

[www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/facts.htm)

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/high-blood-cholesterol>



Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson  
Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders  
Frank D. Formica, Chairman  
Patricia Diamond, Public Health Officer