

# Know your numbers cholesterol

Your body produces two types of cholesterol:

- HDL or “good cholesterol” protects against dangerous blockages in the arteries that can lead to heart disease.
- LDL or “bad cholesterol” is more likely to clog arteries and cause heart disease.

Normal ranges for total cholesterol are 100–199. If your level is higher, talk with your doctor about ways to lower it. The goal is to have your LDL level lower than 100, HDL greater than 40 if you are a male, or greater than 50 if you are a female; and Triglycerides ranging from 45–149.

To improve your cholesterol levels:

- Eat less saturated fats and eat more fruits, vegetables, fish and fiber

- Enjoy more complex carbohydrates, like whole wheat pasta, brown rice and whole wheat breads
- Use healthier oils, such as olive, canola and flax in cooking and salad dressings
- Avoid prepackaged foods, which can be loaded with unhealthy carbohydrates and fats
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Try to work in at least 30 minutes of moderate activity, five days a week



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