

## What Your Cholesterol Check Levels Mean

### Hdl/ldl ratios...reducing cholesterol

Your Cholesterol check report will show your cholesterol levels in milligrams per decilitre of blood (mg/dL). To determine how your hdl/ldl ratios cholesterol levels affect your risk of heart disease, your nutritional therapist will also take into account other risk factors such as age, family history, smoking and high blood pressure. Should your hdl ldl ratios be a concern, a cholesterol reducing plan will be suggested.

A complete fasting lipoprotein profile will show:

- Your total blood (or serum) cholesterol check level
- Your HDL (good) cholesterol check level
- Your LDL (bad) cholesterol check level
- Your triglyceride level

#### Your Total Blood (or Serum) Cholesterol check Level

##### **Less than 200 mg/dL: Desirable**

If your LDL, HDL and triglyceride levels are also at desirable levels and you have no other risk factors for heart disease, total blood cholesterol below 200 mg/dL puts you at relatively low risk of coronary heart disease. Even with a low risk, however, it's still smart to eat a heart-healthy diet get regular physical activity and avoid tobacco smoke. Have a cholesterol check every five years or as your doctor recommends.

##### **200–239 mg/dL: Borderline-High Risk**

If your total cholesterol check level falls between 200 and 239 mg/dL, your doctor will evaluate your levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol, HDL (good) cholesterol and triglycerides. It's possible to have borderline-high total cholesterol numbers with normal levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol balanced by high HDL (good) cholesterol. Work with your nutritional therapist to create a prevention and treatment plan that's right for you. Make lifestyle changes, including eating a heart-healthy diet, getting regular physical activity and avoiding tobacco smoke. Depending on your LDL (bad) cholesterol levels and your other risk factors, you may also need medication, but this you should aim to correct the causes of high cholesterol rather than suppressing it with pharmaceutical chemicals.. Ask your nutritional therapist how often you should have your cholesterol rechecked.

##### **240 mg/dL and over: High Risk**

People who have a total cholesterol check level of 240 mg/dL or more typically have twice the risk of coronary heart disease as people whose cholesterol check level is desirable (200 mg/dL). If your test didn't show your LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol and triglycerides, your doctor should order a fasting profile. Work with your nutritional therapist to create a prevention and treatment plan to reduce cholesterol, that's right for you. Whether or not you need cholesterol-regulating medication for a short while, make lifestyle changes, including eating a heart-healthy diet getting regular physical activity and avoiding tobacco smoke.

#### Your HDL (Good) Cholesterol Level

With HDL (good) cholesterol, higher levels are better. Low HDL cholesterol (less than 40 mg/dL for men, less than 50 mg/dL for women) puts you at higher risk for heart disease. In the average man, HDL cholesterol levels range from 40 to 50 mg/dL. In the average woman, they range from 50 to 60 mg/dL. An HDL cholesterol of 60 mg/dL or higher gives some protection against heart disease.

Smoking, being overweight and being sedentary can all result in lower HDL cholesterol. To raise your HDL level, avoid tobacco smoke, maintain a healthy weight and get at least 30–60 minutes of physical activity more days than not.

People with high blood triglycerides usually also have lower HDL cholesterol and a higher risk of heart attack and stroke. Progesterone, anabolic steroids and male sex hormones (testosterone) also lower HDL cholesterol levels. Female sex hormones raise HDL cholesterol levels.

### **Your LDL (Bad) Cholesterol Level**

The lower your LDL cholesterol, the lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. In fact, it's a better gauge of risk than total blood cholesterol. In general, LDL levels fall into these categories:

<b>LDL Cholesterol Levels</b>	
Less than 100 mg/dL	Optimal
100 to 129 mg/dL	Near Optimal/ Above Optimal
130 to 159 mg/dL	Borderline High
160 to 189 mg/dL	High
190 mg/dL and above	Very High

Your other risk factors for heart disease and stroke help determine what your LDL level should be, as well as the appropriate treatment for you. A healthy level for you may not be healthy for your friend or neighbour. Discuss your levels and your treatment options with your nutritional therapist, and start a cholesterol reducing diet. Get the plan that works for you.

### **Your Triglyceride Level**

Triglyceride is a form of fat. People with high triglycerides often have a high total cholesterol check level, including high LDL (bad) cholesterol and low HDL (good) cholesterol levels.

Your triglyceride level will fall into one of these categories:

- Normal: less than 150 mg/dL
- Borderline-High: 150–199 mg/dL
- High: 200–499 mg/dL
- Very High: 500 mg/dL

Many people have high triglyceride levels due to being overweight/obese, physical inactivity, cigarette smoking, excess alcohol consumption and/or a diet very high in carbohydrates (60 percent or more of calories). High triglycerides are a lifestyle-related risk factor; however, underlying diseases or genetic disorders can be the cause.

The main therapy to reduce cholesterol and triglyceride levels is to change your lifestyle.. This means control your weight, eat a heart-healthy diet, get regular physical activity, avoid tobacco smoke, limit alcohol to one drink per day for women or two drinks per day for men and limit beverages and foods with added sugars. Visit your holistic integrative therapist to create an action plan that will incorporate all these lifestyle changes. Sometimes, medication is needed in addition to a healthy diet and lifestyle. However, Statins have long term side effects detrimental to your health.

A triglyceride level of 150 mg/dL or higher is one of the risk factors of metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome increases the risk for heart disease and other disorders, including diabetes.

Prevention is always better than cure. Get a regular cholesterol check, and, with your nutritional therapist, determine your hdl/lcl ratios. Should you be at risk, your therapist will create an effective cholesterol reducing diet and life style plan. Remember, diet is only part of the cause of a high cholesterol check result...stress is the major contributor, whether emotional, psychological or physiological, caused by toxicity. See clinical kinesiology, stress and disease, toxicity and disease

### Keywords

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