



CRÍ
Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke



Benecol®

PROVEN TO LOWER
CHOLESTEROL

KEEPING YOUR HEART HAPPY

Cholesterol lowering through
diet & lifestyle



CHOLESTEROL

It's worth caring for

Around half of adults have elevated cholesterol.

When you have too much cholesterol in your blood, it builds up in your blood vessels which can result in coronary heart disease.

This process happens over many years and often starts earlier in life than you may think.

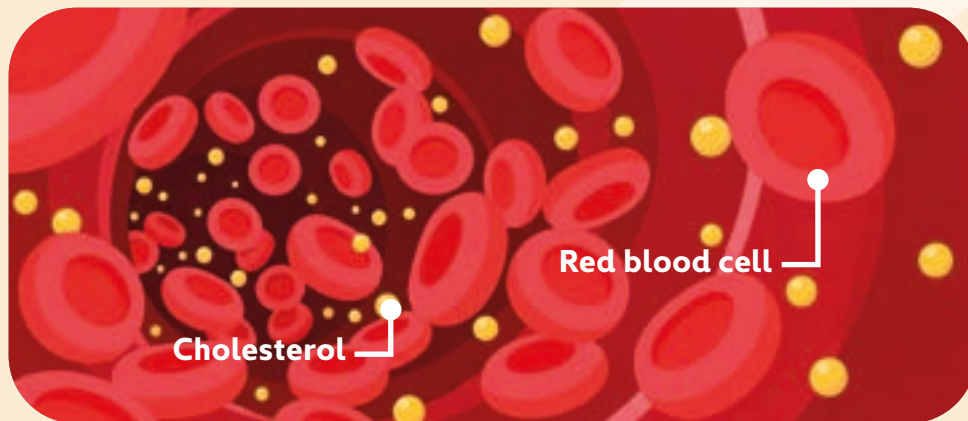
The good news is there are some simple steps you can take to help achieve a healthy cholesterol level, and it starts with diet and lifestyle.



Plant stanol ester has been shown to lower cholesterol. High cholesterol is a risk factor in the development of coronary heart disease. A daily intake of 1.5-2.4g plant stanols has been shown to lower cholesterol by 7-10% in 2-3 weeks. Individual results may vary.

WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance found in your blood that is mostly produced in the liver, but it's also obtained via foods such as red meat, cheese, butter and eggs. **Cholesterol is essential for your body to function normally, but too much can be harmful.**



Red blood cell

Cholesterol

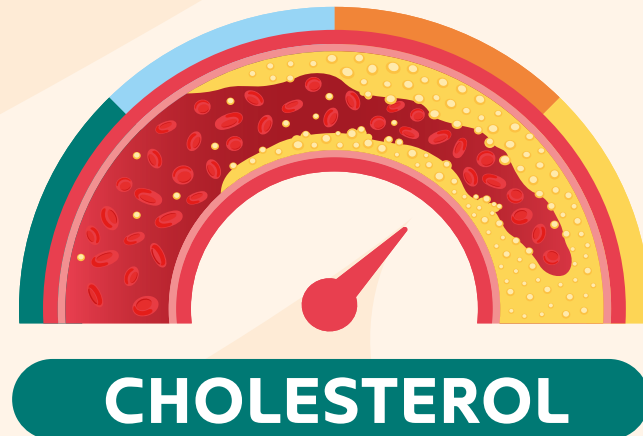
Inside view of blood vessel

Why is high cholesterol bad for me?

When there is too much cholesterol in your blood, it may cause plaque buildup on the walls of your arteries. This condition, known as atherosclerosis, can lead to a variety of health problems as a result of coronary heart disease, such as heart attack or stroke. There are a number of risk factors linked to coronary heart disease (e.g. age, gender, genetic factors, smoking, poor diet and physical inactivity) but cholesterol is one of the main risk factors. Lowering your cholesterol level now can help you avoid problems later on in life.

Who gets elevated cholesterol?

Elevated cholesterol affects people of all ages and backgrounds, no matter whether you are young or old, thin or overweight, or whether you exercise or not. The only way to know if your cholesterol level is elevated is to have it tested. Elevated cholesterol usually has no symptoms so you will only be able to follow your cholesterol level by having regular checkups.



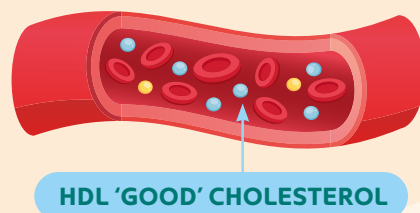
UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHOLESTEROL LEVEL

The first step to finding out whether you have high cholesterol is to have your blood checked. This simple test can be carried out by your healthcare professional and will give you a cholesterol level.

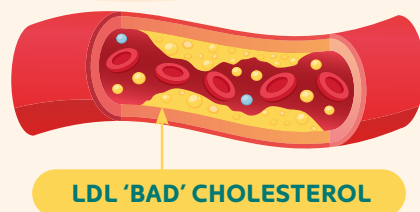
And if you know your level, you can do something about it. Your total cholesterol level includes different types of cholesterol which have different effects in the body.

There are 2 main types:

HDL (HIGH-DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN)
cholesterol is commonly referred to as “good cholesterol” as it is carried away from the peripheral tissues, including arteries, back to the liver for recycling or removal from the body.



LDL (LOW-DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN)
cholesterol is often known as the ‘bad’ type of cholesterol. If there is too much LDL cholesterol in the blood, it can slowly build in the arteries, making them narrower which increases the risk of coronary heart diseases.



Quick tip!

A quick tip to remember the difference is that your LDL should be Lower and your HDL should be Higher. You may also get some additional blood measurements if you get tested.



Other types of cholesterol:

NON-HDL CHOLESTEROL refers to all of the ‘bad’ types of cholesterol, including but not limited to LDL.

TRIGLYCERIDES are not the same as cholesterol but are a type of fat found in your blood and often measured at the same time. A higher level of triglycerides can increase overall cardiovascular disease risk.

LDL-cholesterol and non-HDL cholesterol are the focus of cholesterol lowering. As a guide, healthy adults should aim for results that fall within the limits below:

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL	LDL CHOLESTEROL	HDL CHOLESTEROL	NON-HDL CHOLESTEROL	TRIGLYCERIDES
≤5.0 mmol/l	≤3.0 mmol/l	MEN >1 mmol/l WOMEN >1.2 mmol/l	≤4.0 mmol/l	≤2 mmol/l (fasting) ≤1.7 mmol/l

Cholesterol should not be considered on its own but alongside other risk factors. Healthcare professionals may recommend a different target based on overall risk of cardiovascular disease (using a risk assessment tool) which includes other risk factors or health conditions.

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WHAT CAN I DO TO IMPROVE MY LDL-CHOLESTEROL?

Your healthcare professional will interpret your test results along with other risk factors, such as age, family history, smoking and advise you how to proceed. For most people, it starts with diet and lifestyle. It might be that some simple changes in your routine could help you achieve great results.



In this brochure we focus on food that promotes healthy cholesterol level. Simple steps such as improving the quality of fats that you eat, taking in more fibre, or including Benecol® products with added plant stanols as part of a healthy diet could start lowering your cholesterol level.

Even small daily changes can yield significant results over time.



LDL-Cholesterol lowering with Benecol® products



Benecol® products with added plant stanol ester have been shown to lower cholesterol. Elevated cholesterol is a risk factor for coronary heart disease.

How Benecol® helps lower LDL cholesterol:

- It contains plant stanol ester, which has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol, a risk factor for coronary heart disease
- Works by reducing cholesterol absorption in the digestive tract. Can lower LDL cholesterol in **2-3 weeks*** when consumed daily with a main meal.
- Daily use helps maintain lower cholesterol levels over the long term.
- Works best as part of a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle, when consumed as part of a meal.
- Only Benecol® products contain plant stanol ester.

Taking Benecol® with cholesterol-lowering medication:

- Additive cholesterol-lowering effect, even when using statin medication.
- Talk to your doctor if you are taking cholesterol-lowering medication.

OPTIMISING YOUR DIET

for a healthy cholesterol level

Making good dietary choices is central to achieving good cholesterol levels and is recommended by experts worldwide. The key features of a cholesterol lowering diet include:

-  **Reducing saturated fat intake**
-  **Getting enough dietary fibre**
-  **Incorporating plant stanol-containing products**

On the following pages you will find a table offering options/alternatives to help improve your diet in a practical, convenient way.

		HEALTHIEST CHOICES	EAT OCCASIONALLY	BEST TO LIMIT
FRUIT & VEG	FRUIT 	Fresh, frozen or dried fruit and fruit canned in natural juice	- Canned fruit in syrup (drain the syrup) 100% fruit juice - Fruit smoothie (no added sugar)	- Fruit cooked in butter & sugar - Fruit fritters - Fruit coated in chocolate or candied fruit
	VEG 	- Homemade vegetable based soups - Fresh & frozen vegetables steamed or lightly boiled 100% vegetable juice	- Canned vegetables containing added salt/sugar (rinse & drain) - Fried vegetables - Honey roasted vegetables like parsnips	- Battered, deep fried vegetables (e.g. onion rings) - Buttered vegetables - Pakoras & samosas
	SALADS 	Rainbow salads with a good variety of veg	Reduced fat coleslaw	- Coleslaw - Salads with heavy mayonnaise dressing
CARBOHYDRATES	POTATOES 	- Potatoes, sweet potatoes - Yam and plantain - boiled, baked, mashed (no fat) or dry roasted Leave the skins on for extra fibre!	- Thick cut, reduced-fat oven chips - Roast potatoes cooked in small amounts of vegetable oil such as sunflower, rapeseed or olive oil	- Roast potatoes cooked in dripping or large amounts of oil - Potatoes mashed with butter/cream - Deep fried thin cut chips
	BREAD 	- Bread, bagels, rolls, pitta, tortillas, chapattis - choose wholemeal versions where possible - Wholegrain breakfast cereals, muesli (no added sugar), oats/porridge (with skimmed milk or semi-skimmed milk)	- Naan bread - Non-wholemeal options	- Garlic bread, croissants, waffles - Breads spread thickly with butter or made with ghee (e.g. parathas) - Sugar coated breakfast cereals
	PASTA /RICE 	- Boiled pasta, rice noodles - choose wholemeal versions where possible - Wild rice, pearl barley, quinoa, lentils	- Non-wholemeal options - Filled pasta like ravioli	- Pasta or rice served in creamy/buttery sauces - Fried rice - Cheesey sauces - Instant noodles containing lots of salt, fat or sugar
PROTEIN	MEAT 	- Lean cuts of meat (pork, ham, lamb, beef, venison, veal, rabbit) & remove any visible fat - Extra lean minced meat - Grilled or roasted meat without using fat, or casserole with vegetables	- Lean bacon - Low fat sausages Limit red meat intake to no more than 70 g on average per day	- Fatty cuts of meat - belly pork, duck, goose; fat from edge of meat - Processed meats like streaky bacon, frankfurters, sausages, sausage rolls, salami, parma ham - Meat pies
	POULTRY 	Chicken & turkey without skin - grilled or roasted without fat, casserole with vegetables	- Chicken breast in breadcrumbs - Pan-fried chicken	- Poultry with skin - Kievs - Deep fried chicken - Processed chicken nuggets

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		HEALTHIEST CHOICES	EAT OCCASIONALLY	BEST TO LIMIT
PROTEIN	FISH 	- White fish (e.g. cod, plaice, sole) and oily fish (e.g. salmon, mackerel, herring, fresh tuna) – grilled, baked, steamed, poached or fried in a tiny amount of oil - Canned fish in water	- Canned fish in oil (drain oil) - Fish fingers	- Deep fried fish in batter/breadcrumbs - Fish in buttery or rich sauces (e.g. Hollandaise, lobster sauce)
	EGGS 	Eggs – boiled, scrambled or poached without fat; scrambled eggs with skimmed/semi-skimmed milk Eating three to four eggs a week should be fine	- Fried eggs and omelettes - cooked in minimal vegetable oil	- Quiche - Scotch eggs - Egg mayonnaise
	BEANS, PEAS, LENTILS & OTHER ALTERNATIVES 	- Lentils, beans, peas, chickpeas, kidney beans (rinse if canned in salt/sugar) - Reduced sugar/salt varieties of baked beans - Soya mince, soya beans, tofu - Quorn	Reduced fat hummus	Deep fried falafel
	NUTS & SEEDS 	Nuts and seeds – especially almonds, walnuts, linseed (flaxseed), pumpkin, sesame, sunflower seeds	- Nut butters (choose varieties lower in sugar and salt) - Reduced fat coconut milk	- Coconut, coconut cream, coconut milk - Roasted nuts in oil and salt, chocolate coated nuts - Nut and seed butters with hydrogenated fat
DRINKS	DRINKS 	- Tap, mineral, soda water - Tea/coffee with low fat milk - Low fat milk - Low-fat oat drinks or plant based drinks	- Sugar free squash - Diet fizzy drinks - Sugar free hot chocolate	- Fizzy drinks with added sugar - Drinks made with whole milk and cream - Milkshakes - Hot chocolate
	FLAVOURINGS 	- Pepper, herbs, spices, lemon juice, garlic, etc. - Pickles	- Reduced salt soya sauce - Reduced salt flavouring (e.g. reduced salt stock, ketchup) - Small amount of chilli sauce or low sugar/salt tomato ketchup	Salt, soy sauce
DAIRY & ALTERNATIVES	MILK 	- Skimmed, 1% fat or semi-skimmed milk - Unsweetened and fortified soya drinks		- Full fat milk - Flavoured milk with added sugar - Malted milk
	CHEESE 	Lower fat cheese e.g. cottage, quark, ricotta, fromage frais and 'extra light' soft cheese spreads	Medium fat cheese e.g. half fat cheddar, 'reduced fat' cheese, paneer, 'light' soft cheese spreads	- High fat cheese e.g. cheddar, mascarpone, Red Leicester, Stilton, Gruyere, Parmesan - Soft cheeses such as Brie, Camembert and cream cheese - Fried paneer

		HEALTHIEST CHOICES	EAT OCCASIONALLY	BEST TO LIMIT
DAIRY & ALTERNATIVES	YOGURTS & CREAM 	- Low-fat & low-sugar yogurts - Yogurts & yogurt drinks with plant stanols*/sterols (for people with high cholesterol) - Dairy alternatives e.g. soya yogurts - Low fat Greek yogurt - Unsweetened kefir	- Lower fat cream products - Half fat crème fraîche	- Creamy yogurts; Greek yogurt, coconut yogurt - Clotted, double, whipping, soured, single cream - Crème fraîche
	FATS, SPREADS & OILS 	- Lower, unsaturated fat spreads - Spreads with plant stanols*/sterols (for people with high cholesterol) - Unsaturated vegetable oils e.g. olive, sunflower, rapeseed, (most vegetable oil is made from rapeseed oil), soya, corn – use as little as possible (measure, don't pour) or use a spray oil		- Butter, lard, suet, dripping, ghee, hard margarines, spreads with hydrogenated fat (check the label) - Palm oil, coconut oil - Oils which have been reheated several times
FATTY & SUGARY FOODS	SALAD DRESSINGS & GRAVIES 	- Low fat salad dressings - Gravies & sauces thickened with flour - Tomato/vegetable-based sauces	Lower fat salad creams & mayonnaise	- Salad creams, mayonnaise - Sauces made with butter or cream - Gravies made with fat from cooking meat/poultry
	BISCUITS, CAKES, CONFECTIONERY, PASTRIES & DESSERTS 	- Fruit salads, sorbet - Sugar-free jelly	- Plain biscuits (e.g. rich tea, malted milk biscuits), tea cakes, crumpets, malt bread; fruit buns - Fruit-based puddings - Frozen yogurt - Meringue (without cream) - Jam; fruit preserves	- Cakes, biscuits, pastries, pies, doughnuts, cheesecake - Chocolate, fudge, toffees - Dairy ice cream or ice cream made with cream
	SAVOURY SNACKS 	- Wholemeal breadsticks - Plain popcorn - Tomato-based sauces & dips	- Reduced fat crisps - Reduced fat hummus	- Crisps - Cheese snacks - Bombay mix



Scan me

To discover heart healthy recipes on our website, open your camera on this QR code.



Did you know?



<30g
saturated fat

The average man aged 19–64 years should eat no more than 30 g of saturated fat a day.



<20g
saturated fat

The average woman aged 19–64 years should eat no more than 20 g of saturated fat a day.

You can stay on top of your cholesterol and keep a balance while still enjoying life. Making switches is a simple way to do this without having to make big changes to your diet or lifestyle.

Top tips for REDUCING CHOLESTEROL

Get to know which foods are high in saturated fat - and choose them less often.



Choose healthier cooking methods.



Get wise to hidden saturated fats.



Switch to unsaturated ('good') fat.



Go for fibre. Eat more fruit and vegetables.



Stay physically active.



FOOD DIARY

Keeping a food diary will help you be aware of your own eating patterns and spot opportunities for positive changes to your diet. Use the diary below to write down everything you eat and drink over 3–4 days (try to include 2 week days and 1 weekend). You can use this with your healthcare professional or individually to reflect and commit to some healthy improvements.



DATE	TIME	WHAT I ATE/DRANK (e.g. brown bread with peanut butter and banana)	HOW MUCH (e.g. 2 slices, 1 tsp, whole fruit)

DATE	TIME	WHAT I ATE/DRANK (e.g. brown bread with peanut butter and banana)	HOW MUCH (e.g. 2 slices, 1 tsp, whole fruit)

Reflection, comments, goals/commitments:

MY PERSONAL PLAN:

Cholesterol-lowering dietary requirements



Download me

To download this booklet on your device, open your camera on this QR code.

Improving the quality of my diet.

My practical steps:

Other planned lifestyle changes / additional information:

Reducing bad habits.

My practical steps:



BENECOL[®] PRODUCTS CONTAIN PLANT STANOLS – PROVEN TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL



**A daily intake of 1.5-2.4g plant stanols
lowers cholesterol in 2-3 weeks***

To get the right amount of plant stanols, you can choose one of the following options:

1 x Benecol Yogurt Drink



OR

1 x Benecol Yogurt



OR

30g or 6 teaspoons of
Benecol Spread



Sign up

Join the Benecol community
to receive exclusive news
and offers.



Charity Registration No: 1003904
For further information: www.heartuk.org.uk



Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

Charity Registration No: 20016616
For further information: www.croi.ie

For more information and advice, visit Benecol® online.

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