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Grade level – 6.0!

## Do your kids need their cholesterol checked too?

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat that is made in our bodies. It can also be found in food. Our bodies need cholesterol to function normally.

Why do we check cholesterol?

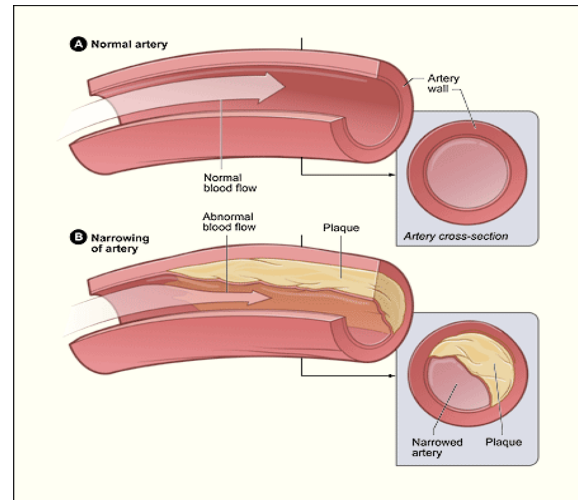
High levels of “bad” cholesterol can cause damage and blockages in arteries that carry blood from your heart to your body. This can cause strokes and heart attacks in adults.

How do we get high cholesterol?

High cholesterol can be caused by a poor diet and lack of exercise. Others have high cholesterol because it runs in the family.

When is cholesterol checked?

Most people have their cholesterol checked in their early 20s. It is checked every 5 years afterwards.



### Is cholesterol checked in children?

Most children and young adults have normal cholesterol. As a result, most do not have artery damage. High cholesterol damages arteries over **long** periods of time. More children are having high cholesterol due to poor diet and not enough exercise. **As a result, many physicians believe all children should have their cholesterol checked.** This might help prevent future damage to arteries.

When should your child be checked?

Cholesterol should be checked around 10 years of age.

What happens if their cholesterol is high?

Your doctor may send you to a diet and exercise program. If this does not help, then your doctor can prescribe medicine.

### Additional Resources:

[www.heart.org/cholesterol](http://www.heart.org/cholesterol)

What is cholesterol? <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hbc/>

### Key Words:

Pediatric Screening, Dyslipidemia, Atherosclerosis

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