

Title: Cholesterol: How it affects your health.

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Abstract: This is a patient oriented informational pamphlet designed to introduce patients to the topic of hyperlipidemia. It contains very basic information on the subject cholesterol and general treatment of hyperlipidemia.

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout.

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## *I don't have high cholesterol...do I?*

About 17-30% of adults in the U.S. have high cholesterol.

## *Who needs to be screened for high cholesterol?*

Men who are 35 and older, and women who are 45 and older. Also, all diabetics should be screened regularly for high cholesterol.

## *What is the test, and how do I get tested?*

Cholesterol is measured through a simple blood test, and most clinics are able to test cholesterol levels.



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# **Cholesterol: How it affects your health.**

### ***What is cholesterol?***

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found in every cell of the body. We all need some cholesterol to keep our bodies working normally.

### ***What is the difference between LDL and HDL?***

There are different types of cholesterol. LDL is also known as the “bad” cholesterol because high levels of this cholesterol can lead to buildup in arteries. HDL cholesterol is known as the “good” cholesterol because it carries cholesterol from other parts of the body back to the liver for processing.

### ***Why is high cholesterol dangerous?***

High LDL cholesterol levels lead to a buildup of cholesterol along the walls of arteries. This increases the risk of heart disease.

### ***What causes high cholesterol?***

People who have diets high in cholesterol and who have family members with high cholesterol are at increased risk.

### ***How can I lower my cholesterol?***

Improving your diet by not eating foods high in fat and cholesterol, increasing your amount of regular exercise, and losing weight are a good way to start lowering your cholesterol. Unfortunately some people aren’t able to lower their cholesterol with these changes alone. There are many different medications available that are very good at helping people keep their cholesterol down.