

High Blood Cholesterol

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a kind of fat in your body. Your body makes it, but too much cholesterol may come from the food you eat. Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables are low in cholesterol.

Your health provider may order a blood test to check your cholesterol. You do not need to check it more than once a year unless you are trying to lower it.

Where can I get my cholesterol checked?

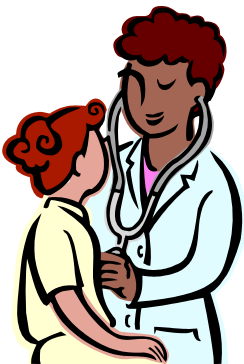
Free testing:

- RAHMA Mercy Clinic
(352)792-8324
- Equal Access Clinic
(352)273-8614

Keep your total cholesterol in the healthy range below.



What does high blood cholesterol do?



High blood cholesterol means that you have too much cholesterol clogging your blood vessels. This makes it hard for your blood to flow.

You have a higher chance to get heart failure or a heart attack when you have high cholesterol. **Heart disease is the biggest killer of men and women in the United States.**

Who is at risk?

- You have a higher chance of high cholesterol if you have family with it.
- Your blood cholesterol can rise as you get older. Women after menopause can have changing levels of cholesterol.
- Being overweight and not exercising also put you at risk.



How can I lower my cholesterol?

Your health provider can prescribe a medicine to help lower your blood cholesterol.

Below are ways you can control your cholesterol.

1. **Exercise most days** for at least 30 minutes.
2. **Watch your weight.** Keep it within the healthy range that you see in the BMI chart we give you at the clinic.
3. **Avoid high cholesterol, saturated fat, and trans fat** in your food. Limit fried foods, fast foods, and corner store snacks.
4. **Eat low cholesterol foods** like fish, lean meat, skinless poultry, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.
5. **Quit smoking.** Ask us for information on how to stop. Contact the Florida Quitline at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1-877-822-6669) to get help from a coach.



More Resources

The American Heart Association (<http://www.heart.org>)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>)

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol>)