

Cholesterol and Diabetes Management Tips

Lifestyle Modifications for Cholesterol

Can I lower my cholesterol by changing my diet?

Maybe. Some people can lower their cholesterol by changing their diet. But this does not always work. Still, you can improve your overall health by eating better.

- Eating more soluble fiber – Soluble fiber is found in fruits, oats, barley, beans, and peas.
- A vegetarian or vegan diet – A vegetarian diet contains no meat. A vegan diet contains no animal products at all, including meat, eggs, or milk.
- Replacing meat with soy sometimes – Soy-based products include tofu and tempeh.

If you have high cholesterol, it might help to avoid or limit saturated fats. These are found in foods like:

- Red meat
- Butter
- Fried foods
- Cheese
- Baked goods, such as cookies, cakes, or brownies

Are there specific foods that can lower my cholesterol?

There are some foods that seem to help lower cholesterol, including:

- **Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids** – Studies show that people who eat lots of these foods are less likely to have heart disease than those who eat less of them. Examples include oily fish (such as salmon, herring, or tuna), olive oil, and canola oil. It's fine to eat 1 to 2 servings of oily fish a week.
- **Nuts** – Some studies show that eating certain nuts can help lower cholesterol. They might even lower the risk of heart attack or death. These nuts include walnuts, almonds, and pistachios.
- **Fiber-rich foods** – These foods seem to lower cholesterol and are generally good for your health. Examples include fruits, vegetables, beans, and oats. Some doctors even recommend taking fiber supplements.

Diabetic Diet Tips

Diet is important because it is part of diabetes treatment. Many people need to change what they eat and how much they eat to help treat their diabetes. It is important for people to treat their diabetes so that they:

- Keep their blood sugar at or near a normal level
- Prevent long-term problems, such as heart or kidney problems, that can happen in people with diabetes

Carbohydrates (or "carbs") – Carbohydrates are sugars that our bodies use for energy. They can raise a person's blood sugar level. Your doctor, nurse, or dietitian will tell you how many carbohydrates you should eat at each meal or snack. Foods that have carbohydrates include:

- Bread, pasta, and rice
- Vegetables and fruits
- Dairy foods
- Foods and drinks with added sugar

It is best to get your carbohydrates from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat milk. It is best to avoid drinks with added sugar, like soda, juices, and sports drinks.

- **Protein** – Your doctor, nurse, or dietitian will tell you how much protein you should eat each day. It is best to eat lean meats, fish, eggs, beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds. Avoid or limit processed meats like bacon, hot dogs, and sausages.
- **Fats** – The type of fat you eat is more important than the amount of fat. "Saturated" and "trans" fats can increase your risk for heart problems, like a heart attack.
 - Foods that have saturated fats include meat, butter, cheese, and ice cream
 - Foods that have trans fats include processed food with "partially hydrogenated oils" on the ingredient list. This might include fried foods, store-bought cookies, muffins, pies, and cakes.
- "Monounsaturated" and "polyunsaturated" fats are better for you. Foods with these types of fat include fish, avocado, olive oil, and nuts.
- **Calories** – You need to eat a certain amount of calories each day to keep your weight the same. If you are overweight and want to lose weight, you need to eat fewer calories each day.
- **Fiber** – Eating foods with a lot of fiber can help control your blood sugar level. Foods that have a lot of fiber include apples, green beans, peas, beans, lentils, nuts, oatmeal, and whole grains.
- **Salt** – People who have high blood pressure should not eat foods that contain a lot of salt (also called sodium). People with high blood pressure should also eat healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy foods.
- **Alcohol** – Having more than 1 drink (for females) or 2 drinks (for males) a day can raise blood sugar levels. Also, drinks that have fruit juice or soda in them can raise blood sugar levels.