

# Lowering Your Cholesterol: Life Saving Tips

Compiled by Dr. Michael B. Ackerman, D.C.

[www.DepthHealing.com](http://www.DepthHealing.com)

According to the Framingham Heart Study, **90%** of all coronary deaths could be prevented if we kept ...

- (1) Our cholesterol levels below **180**
- (2) Systolic blood pressure at or below **120**  
(in the absence of a smoking habit or diabetes)

Fact: **90%** of all people could achieve a cholesterol level of **150** by choosing to adopt a **Vegetarian diet** alone ...

Most people could achieve a cholesterol level of **150-180** by just adopting a **low fat diet**:

This low fat diet should consist of no more than

- **7-15 grams** (65-135 calories) of saturated fat and
- **150-200 mg** of cholesterol

## Examples of the Saturated Fat Content of Common Foods...

Keep Your Intake Between 7-15 Grams Daily

Food Category	Portion	Saturated Fat Content (grams)	Calories
Cheese			
• Regular cheddar cheese	1 oz	6.0	114
• Low-fat cheddar cheese	1 oz	1.2	49
• Non-fat cheeses	1 oz	0	32
Ground beef			
• Regular ground beef (25% fat)	3 oz (cooked)	6.1	236
• Extra-lean ground beef (5% fat)	3 oz (cooked)	2.6	148
Milk			
• Whole milk (3.24%)	1 cup	4.6	146
• Low-fat (1%) milk	1 cup	1.5	102
Breads			
• Croissant (med)	1 medium	6.6	231
• Bagel, oat bran (4")	1 medium	0.2	227
Frozen desserts			
• Regular ice cream	1/2 cup	4.9	145
• Frozen yogurt, low-fat	1/2 cup	2.0	110
Table spreads			
• Butter	1 tsp	2.4	34
• Soft margarine with zero trans	1 tsp	0.7	25
Chicken			
• Fried chicken (leg with skin)	3 oz (cooked)	3.3	212
• Roasted chicken (breast no skin)	3 oz (cooked)	0.9	140
Fish			
• Fried fish	3 oz	2.8	195
• Baked fish	3 oz	1.5	129

## Examples of The Cholesterol Content of Common Foods Keep This Between 150-200 mg Daily

(Note: Cholesterol is only found in foods of animal origin –  
so **fruits and vegetables and grains have no cholesterol.**)

<b>Food</b>	<b>Cholesterol (mg)</b>
Oatmeal, 1 cup	0
Corn flakes cereal, 1 cup	0
1 Egg white	0
Non-fat milk, 1 cup	5
2 slices extra lean ham	27
Croissant with butter	38
2 slices French toast with butter	116
1 medium whole egg	186
1 extra-large whole egg	245
Breakfast biscuit with egg & sausage	302
<b>All fruit</b>	<b>0</b>
8 oz plain low-fat yogurt	14
1 small slice pepperoni pizza	14
1 cup tomato soup with milk	17
1 cup chicken noodle soup	19
Chocolate milkshake	43
Salad with chicken, no dressing	72
6" roast beef submarine	73
1 large fast food taco	87
Cheeseburger	88
Double hamburger	122
<b>All vegetables</b>	<b>0</b>
Chow mein noodles	0
1 tablespoon no trans fat margarine	0
1 cup canned pasta with meatballs	20
½ cup chocolate ice cream	22
1 tablespoon butter	31
½ chicken breast, no skin	73
1 piece pecan pie	106
6 oz turkey, light meat	116
6 oz baked salmon	135
6 oz ground beef, 75% lean	152
6-8 breaded, fried shrimp	200
6 oz cooked chicken liver	880

Although saturated fat is the main dietary culprit that raises “bad” cholesterol levels, **trans fat** and **dietary cholesterol** also contribute significantly. *Trans* fat can often be found in processed foods made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils such as vegetable shortenings, some margarines (especially margarines that are harder), crackers, chips, candies, cookies, snack foods, fried foods, and commercial baked goods.

*Trans* fat is formed when liquid oils are made into **solid fats**: like shortening and hard margarine. Essentially, *trans* fat is made when hydrogen is added to vegetable oil -- a process called hydrogenation. Hydrogenation increases the shelf life and flavor stability of foods containing these fats. However, this has detrimental when taken into the body. The daily intake of about 5 g of trans fat is associated with a 25% increase in the risk of coronary artery disease.

*Trans* fat, like saturated fat and dietary cholesterol, raises **LDL** cholesterol (the “bad” form of cholesterol) that increases your risk for heart disease. On average, Americans consume 4 to 5 times as much saturated fat as *trans* fat in their diet.

### **Increase Your “Good Fats”: Mono and Poly-Unsaturated Fats**

Mono and Polyunsaturated fats each raise your “good” (**HDL**) cholesterol while lowering your bad cholesterol (LDL). These fats appear as **clear liquids** at room temperature.

Good Sources of **Monounsaturated Fats** include...

Olives and Olive oil

Canola Oil

Peanut Oil

**Raw Nuts** such as Cashews, Almonds, Walnuts, etc.

Avocados

Good Sources of **Polyunsaturated Fats** include...

Corn Oil\*

Safflower Oil\*

Soybean Oil\*

**Fish Oils**

\* These oils are derived from some of the most pesticide treated and genetically modified foods in agriculture. It is therefore best to buy Non-GMO and organic varieties when available.

### **Get Adequate Daily Dietary Fiber**

Our **fiber** intake should be approximately 30-50 grams per day (ask for handout). A recent study found that a dietary fiber intake of 30 grams lowered the risk of coronary artery disease by 12% in U.S. men and women. **Fiber is found only in non-animal based foods**, such as grains, fruits, and vegetables. It occurs in two forms: soluble fiber and insoluble fiber.

**Soluble fiber** forms a gel when mixed with water, such as is found in apples, bananas, and oat meal, etc. Soluble fiber is most beneficial for lowering cholesterol. **Insoluble**

**fiber** does not form a gel upon mixing it with water, such as apple skins, wheat bran, and lettuce leaves. Insoluble fiber is beneficial as a bulking agent to aid in stool passage.

Soluble fiber supplements should not replace any of our 8-12 servings of fruits and vegetables per day; however, adding... **Psyllium husk fiber** (10 gm/day) or ... **Ground Flax seed** (50 gm/day) can help additionally reduce your cholesterol.

## **Add Sufficient Cardiovascular Exercise**

Research has reported significant increases in HDL levels in men that exercised at or above 75% heart rate maximum (maxHR), 3 times a week for 12 weeks. No changes in HDL were reported in the subjects that exercised at 65% maxHR. To calculate your training heart rate, take the quantity (220-Your Age) and multiply it by 0.75 to get your target minimum training heart rate which will positively affect your HDL levels. For example, if you are 40 years old, take  $(220-40) \times .75 = (180) \times .75 = 135$  beats per minute for your training heart rate.

**Important Note:** **If you are out of shape, start training at a lower heart rate level to gradually build up to a 75% max heart rate level. A good rule of thumb is never exercise at a sustained level which has you breathing so hard that you cannot carry on a normal conversation.** When beginning exercise, also start with exercise duration of 5 or 10 or 20 minutes, and gradually add more time with succeeding sessions.

**Your recommended training heart rate for beginning your program is \_\_\_\_\_ bpm. Increase your heart rate by \_\_\_ bpm every 3 weeks up to a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ bpm.**

**Exercise volume, however, is more important than exercise intensity.** It was reported that weekly total mileage was more important in raising HDL levels than was exercise intensity. Interestingly, a higher volume of exercise provided significant increases in HDL in a shorter period of time. This indicates that there may be a relationship between exercise volume and the length of the training program. Most of the exercise training studies identify a weekly mileage threshold of 7 to 10 miles/week for significant increases in HDL's. This correlates with an average minimum work-out of **25 to 40 minutes, 3 times per week, at a gym on cardiovascular training equipment.** If you are eventually able to exercise up to 60 minutes, it would be even better.

## **Taking Fish Oil Supplements**

These supplements benefit the body in an incredible number of ways, but especially they benefit the heart due to their anti-inflammatory effects and their ability to increase HDL cholesterol while lowering LDL. When taking fish oil supplements, always take capsules as opposed to the liquid form, which quickly goes rancid--even in the refrigerator.

Research has shown that taking a Fish Oil and Essential Fatty Acid supplement, one needs to consume a level of at least 2700mg EPA and 1300 mg DHA per day to achieve the ideal benefits. This may equal 5-20 capsules per day depending on the brand of oils you get... check the labeled dosage! For example, GNC brand "Triple Strength Fish

Oil” or Twinlab’s “Mega Twin EPA Fish Oil” supplements require only 5 capsules per day to supply 2700 mg EPA. Several other brands offer similarly concentrated fish oils.

**Note:** for many reasons and the potential side effects, I do not recommend an ‘**Aspirin a Day**’ regimen. The same benefits could easily be accrued by consuming essential fats which have none of the same side effects, and so many more benefits. **It is especially not advisable to consume an aspirin a day + fish oils, as the combined total “blood thinning”/anti-clotting effect becomes too great, and potentially very dangerous.**

### **DRUG THERAPY: Not the first resort... but the last resort**

Most physicians would recommend drug therapy if your cholesterol is **>270 mg/dl**  
Ideally, your **total cholesterol** should be less than **180 mg/dl** and your...  
**HDL** cholesterol levels should be greater than **40 mg/dl** and  
**LDL** cholesterol levels should be less than **100 mg/dl**

Before drug therapy is considered, in addition to diet and exercise as explained, you may consider trying to lower your cholesterol over a **6 month trial period** by adding these supplements...

**Gum Guggul** - 75-100 mg/day can produce a cholesterol reduction of 14% to 27% in 4-12 weeks, in addition to a 22% to 30% drop in blood triglyceride levels, in patients with hypercholesterolemia and/or hypertriglyceridemia.

**Policosanol** - 10-20 mg / day can decrease your LDL cholesterol between 21% and 29%, and raise HDL levels up to 28% -- better than Statins which don’t raise HDL’s at all.

Good commercial formulas containing both Gum Guggul and Policosanol are:

- (1) “**ChoLESStat**” by MRM (Dosage: 2 per day) **or**
- (2) “**Cholesterol Support**” by Now Foods (Dosage: 3 per day) **or**
- (3) “**Cholestaysis**” which is double the price, but not better - available on the web

**NOTE:** **Niacin** also has documented effects for improving one’s cholesterol profile, but recent research has shown it has no effect on decreasing the likelihood of a heart attack and it actually may increase the incidence of strokes. **Liver injury is also a significant possibility when niacin is taken at the doses often prescribed of 1000-4000 mg. So I don’t recommend taking niacin at high dosage levels... 25 to 100 mg per day is fine.**

If these dietary changes, supplements, and exercise do not adequately lower your cholesterol, then drug therapy should be finally considered. The initial course of therapy should start with a “**Bile Acid Sequestering Drug**” (e.g. **Cholestyrimine, Cholestipol etc.--** these have fewer side effects. Only in the event of failure with this course of therapy should one lastly consider **Statin Drugs**; however, many doctors will prescribe them first. To learn more about their many dangerous side effects, in addition to their less than adequate effectiveness for improving your overall health picture, please request more information and the handout: “**What you may not know about Statin Drugs.**”