



Neighborhood Health Partners

Living with High Cholesterol

Too much cholesterol inside your blood vessels is dangerous. It can keep blood from getting to your heart.

Warning Signs

There are no warning signs of high cholesterol.

Diagnosis

The nurse or doctor will measure the fats in your blood. He or she will do this using a lab test called a fasting blood test. The doctor will measure three kinds of fats:

- LDL (low-density lipoprotein), or “bad” cholesterol, blocks your blood vessels
- HDL (high-density lipoprotein), or “good” cholesterol, removes LDL from blood vessels
- Triglycerides (TGs) are fats in the blood and are a good source of energy

Healthy Lab Values

- Total Cholesterol: Less than 200 mg/dL
- LDL: Less than 100 mg/dL
- HDL: More than 60 mg/dL
- Triglycerides: Less than 150 mg/dL

Other Health Risks

Having high cholesterol means you are more likely to have other health problems such as ...

- Heart disease
- Chest pain
- Heart attack
- Stroke

Tips to Help You Control High Cholesterol

- Eat fewer fatty foods
- Eat foods rich in fiber
- Exercise regularly
- Take all medications in the right amounts
- Don't drink alcohol
- Don't smoke or use tobacco

Signs of a Heart Attack

- Chest pain
- Pain in arms, back, neck or jaw
- Difficulty taking a full breath
- Nausea

Signs of a Stroke

- Drooping in the face
- Weakness in one arm
- Slurred talking

If you have signs of a heart attack or stroke, call your doctor or 911 right away!

Reference Guideline: 2013 ACC/AHA guideline on the treatment of blood cholesterol to reduce atherosclerotic cardiovascular risk in adults: a report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Practice Guidelines. 2013 November