



# Your Guide to Managing Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a necessary fat in your blood that helps your cells grow. Your liver makes most of the cholesterol in your body, and the rest comes from the foods you eat, like meat, fish, poultry, egg yolks and milk products.

## There is good and bad cholesterol

If you have too much bad cholesterol, it combines with fat, calcium, and other substances to form fatty deposits called plaque on the inside of your blood vessels. This narrows the flow of blood to your heart and brain, increasing your chance of having a heart attack or stroke. Good cholesterol helps carry the bad cholesterol away from your blood and back to your liver to get rid of it.



## Here is how you can keep your bad cholesterol low and your good cholesterol high:

**Eat the right fats** – Limit trans fats (found in fast foods and processed foods) and saturated fats (red meat and high-fat dairy products) and choose monounsaturated fats (olive and canola oils, avocados and nuts) and Omega-3 polyunsaturated fats (fatty fish like salmon, trout, herring and sardines).

**Pump up the fibre** – Soluble fibre such as oatmeal and oat bran, legumes (dried beans, peas and lentils) and apples, strawberries and citrus fruits can help lower your bad cholesterol. Check food product labels and look for 100% whole grain at the beginning of the ingredient list and products with at least two grams of fibre.



**Be active** – Try to have at least two and a half hours of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity per week. This can be in bouts of 10 minutes or more, such a brisk walk, playing with your kids, or walking the dog.

**Quit smoking** – Smoking increases bad cholesterol, reduces oxygen in the blood and increases blood pressure.

**Medication** – If the proper diet and exercise isn't enough for you to reach healthy cholesterol levels, your physician may prescribe a cholesterol-lowering medication.

## Actively manage your health

Talk to your physician about having your cholesterol levels checked if you:

- are over 40 (male) or over 50 or post-menopausal (female)
- have heart disease, stroke, diabetes or high blood pressure
- have a family history of heart disease or stroke
- have a waist measurement of more than 102 centimetres/40 inches (men) or 88 centimetres/35 inches (women). If you are of Chinese or South Asian descent: 90 centimetres/35 inches (men) or 80 centimetres/32 inches (women).

**Learn more about your cholesterol levels through a simple blood test at Dynacare.**