



Health Hint article by David Coory

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What to look for in your blood cholesterol test

When you have a cholesterol blood test, the laboratory usually also measures the level of your other blood fats known collectively as triglycerides. Triglycerides transport energy to the cells.

Optimum levels to look for in a cholesterol blood test are:

- ▶ HDL cholesterol 2mmol/l or higher.
- ▶ LDL cholesterol 3mmol/L or lower.
- ▶ Triglycerides (blood energy fats) 2mmol/L or lower.

Ideally your HDL cholesterol should be 40% or more of your total cholesterol. For example if your total cholesterol is 5mmol/L your HDL should be 2mmol/L (40%) or higher.

Low HDL cholesterol can be dangerous

Besides an increased risk of cardiovascular problems, HDL cholesterol levels below the minimum of 2mmol/l have been linked with depression and anti-social behaviour.

A very low HDL cholesterol level, below 1mmol/l, or less than 20% of your total cholesterol, can be a danger sign for possible heart fibrillation (an abnormal beating rhythm), the main cause of death following a non-fatal heart attack.

Causes of low HDL cholesterol

- ▶ Ongoing stress, anxiety or anger (ie, high blood adrenal and cortisol levels).
- ▶ Excessive sugar (including fructose in fruit drinks and honey) and caffeine.
- ▶ Lack of Omega 3 fat (ideally should be 1 part Omega 3 or higher to four parts Omega 6).
- ▶ Excess Omega 6 fat (from margarine and baking vegetable fats).
- ▶ Smoking and lack of exercise.
- ▶ Not enough essential minerals. (In particular Magnesium, Calcium, Potassium, Manganese, Zinc, Selenium, Chromium and Iodine.)

Healthy high HDL cholesterol levels are more often found in regions where

the drinking water is hard and contains Magnesium and Calcium. Both these minerals have a relaxing effect on the body and mind.

Causes of high LDL cholesterol

High levels of LDL cholesterol are usually the result of low levels of HDL cholesterol.

This is because there is not enough HDL cholesterol circulating in the blood, to carry away LDL repair debris from arteries and other areas of the body. See my July-Aug 2011 catalogue Health Hint article "Cholesterol – why higher can be better" also online at www.healthhouse.co.nz/healthhints.aspx

So raising low HDL should take care of high LDL.

Should I take a cholesterol lowering drug?

These drugs (such as Lipex) are known as Statins and are now the world's most heavily prescribed medication. However numerous independent studies have found that taking Statins to artificially lower cholesterol has not reduced the incidence of blocked arteries. This is a logical outcome when the true role of cholesterol is understood.

Statins often cause health problems – sore, weak muscles (the heart is also a muscle), a 'fogged up' mind, and long term liver damage. These problems are believed mostly due to a typical 40% reduced output by the liver of the health-promoting hormone/enzyme known as CoQ10. Because of side effects, around 70% of people give up Statins within a few months.

In a small percentage of people, Statins have reduced the number of heart attacks or strokes, but this is now believed due to a Statin side effect of raising nitrous oxide levels in the blood. Nitrous oxide relaxes arteries, allowing them to widen and carry more blood. Even allowing for this effect, 100 people would have to take a Statin drug for more than three years to avoid just one heart attack. Dr Joseph Mercola states "The odds are very high, greater than 100 to 1, that you don't need drugs to lower your cholesterol."

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