



# Cholesterol 101

## What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that is produced by the liver and animal products we consume. Cholesterol is used to produce hormones, vitamin D, and bile acids, which help the body digest fat. The body needs some cholesterol to function properly; it becomes a problem when there is too much or too high of a level. There are four major components of cholesterol that everyone should have a basic understanding of:

**Low-density Lipoprotein (LDL)** is your “lousy” cholesterol because it increases artery blockage, which leads to higher risk for heart attacks. The “lower” the number the better.

<b>Target</b>	Below 130
<b>Borderline</b>	130-159
<b>High Risk</b>	Above 160

**High-density Lipoprotein (HDL)** is your “healthy” cholesterol because it helps prevent your arteries from being clogged. The “higher” the number the better.

<b>Target</b>	Above 40
<b>Risk</b>	Below 40

**Triglycerides** are fat in the blood that is used for energy. When you have excess triglycerides, they are stored as fat, which can increase your risk for heart disease.

<b>Target</b>	Below 150
<b>Borderline</b>	150-199
<b>High Risk</b>	Above 200

**Total Cholesterol** combines all the components of cholesterol.

<b>Target</b>	Below 200
<b>Borderline</b>	200-239
<b>High Risk</b>	Above 240

## Getting Screened

The American Heart Association recommends beginning cholesterol screenings at age 20. If you have a family history or several other risk factors, talk with your physician and get your cholesterol screened prior to age 20. Fasting for 9 to 12 hours is required for the blood lipid panel. Once sent to the lab, it typically takes 4 to 6 weeks to receive results. There are no signs or symptoms of high cholesterol, which is why it is important to get screened!



## Risk Factors

**Family History** in a parent or sibling.

**Smoking** damages the walls of blood vessels, making them likely to accumulate fatty deposits and lower HDL.

**Obesity** with a body mass index 30 or greater.

**Poor Diet.** Avoid eating saturated fats and trans fat. Eat more nuts, berries, and seeds.

**Lack of Exercise.** Exercise increases HDL and lowers LDL.

**High Blood Pressure** increases pressure on artery walls and can cause damage. Damaged artery walls can accumulate fatty deposits.

## Show Your Body Who's Boss



**SHOW YOUR BODY WHO'S BOSS.**  
Be active daily.

It's really important to be active. It can keep you healthy while lowering your risk for heart disease. And, it can be as easy as walking for 30 minutes a day. This color change will help you show your body who's boss, and it won't be showing you this.

Help available with funding from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.



Regular physical activity is one of the best things you can do for your body. Depending on the level of intensity, physical activity often enhances physical fitness, health, and wellbeing. It improves your chances of living a longer, healthier life, helps relieve stress and depression, improves sleep, increases heart, lung, and muscle health, helps prevent certain cancers, type II diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and elevated cholesterol levels.

Staying active during the winter months can be a challenge for everyone, especially in Iowa! Here are a some ways to stay active during the winter: walk the mall, take the stairs, create a home gym, dust off that old workout DVD, download a fitness app to your phone or tablet, join a gym/fitness class/indoor pool, shovel snow, take up a winter sport such as skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, snow shoeing, or go sledding with the kids.

Show your body who's boss by aiming to be active as little as 30 minutes a day!



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- *Scott County Board of Health Meeting, Scott County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Boardroom, 12:00 PM Thursday, February 20, 2014.*

### OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

### OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.

## SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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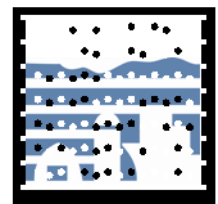
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