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| <p><b>Fruit &amp; Vegetables</b><br/>Choose fresh, frozen, tinned or dried fruit or vegetables, salad vegetables. Boiled, mashed, baked or dry roasted potatoes.</p>  | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Fried vegetables, deep fried chips, micro chips, roast potatoes, mixed salads in mayonnaise e.g. coleslaw, potato salad.</p>  |
| <p><b>Confectionery, preserves, sauces, soups &amp; drinks</b><br/>Mints, boiled sweets, fruit pastilles, jelly babies, liquorice, marshmallows, sherbet sweets, jam, marmalade, honey, syrup, treacle, pickles, olives, mint sauce, low fat salad dressings, French dressing, tomato based dips, lentil or vegetable soups, fruit juices, squash, soft drinks.</p> | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Chocolate, toffee, butterscotch, fudge, Indian sweets, chocolate spread, mayonnaise, creamy or cheesy sauces, cream soups, chocolate or malted milk drinks, cream liqueurs.</p> |
| <p><b>Seasonings</b><br/>Garlic, herbs, spices, pepper, mustard, vinegar, lemon juice, tomato puree.</p>  | <p><b>Limit</b><br/>Salt, stock cubes, soya sauce, Bovril, Marmite, vegetable extract and gravy granules particularly if you have high blood pressure.</p>   |

**Food Labels:** The British Heart Foundation produce a useful leaflet "Guide to food labelling". [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk) Tel. No: 020 7935 0185

### Trying to lose weight?

- Limit quantity of all fats & oils used.
- Serve average portion of plain boiled potatoes, baked potatoes, boiled rice or pasta with meals. Avoid adding extra fat or oil.
- Avoid foods containing sugar, glucose, honey, syrup, treacle.
- Try to avoid extra snacks. Fresh fruit can be taken in moderation
- Limit alcohol
- Set a realistic goal. If you lose 0.5kg or 1lb each week consistently, this adds up to a loss of 6.5kg or approximately 1 stone in 3 months.

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# Controlling your cholesterol

## This leaflet explains

- the different types of cholesterol and fat
- the effect these have on your risk of heart disease
- how you can alter your diet to reduce your risk of heart disease

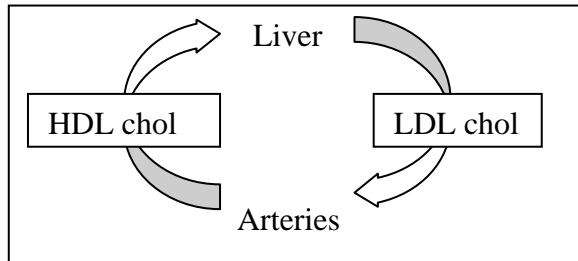
If you have other dietary aspects to consider such as diabetes continue to follow the advice you have been given in addition to the information on this leaflet. If you want to discuss how to do this, contact your dietitian or ask your GP to refer you to one.

**What is cholesterol?**

Cholesterol is a fatty substance which plays a vital role in the cells of your body. Very little cholesterol is found in food. Your liver makes it from the saturated fats in the food you eat. It is essential for life and is carried around in your blood.

**What is HDL and LDL cholesterol?**

These carry cholesterol in your blood.



*HDL cholesterol* is often referred to as “good” cholesterol because it carries cholesterol away from your blood vessels and back to the liver. The liver processes

the cholesterol to make substances needed by the body.

*LDL cholesterol* is often referred to as “bad” cholesterol because high levels increase your risk of heart disease. It carries cholesterol from your liver to your blood vessels.

The aim is to keep the levels of HDL cholesterol high and LDL cholesterol low. This helps to prevent fatty deposits narrowing the walls of your blood vessels.

**Should I restrict foods rich in cholesterol if my cholesterol levels are raised?**

The most important change is to reduce your intake of saturated fat (see page 3). It is also wise to limit how much and how often you eat foods rich in cholesterol such as eggs, liver, kidneys and shellfish. This is particularly important if you have been told you have a genetic condition called familial hypercholesterolaemia or hyperlipidaemia.

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| <p><b>Cheese</b><br/>Very low fat cheese such as cottage cheese can be used freely. Limit medium fat cheeses such as half fat Cheddar, Austrian smoked, Camembert to approximately 100g (4oz) per week. Ask for a leaflet on the fat content of cheeses for more details</p>                              | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Full fat cheese such as Cheddar, Lancashire, Stilton, Danish Blue, Wensleydale, Roule, Boursin, Cream cheese, Mascarpone</p>   |
| <p><b>Vegetarian Meals / Nuts</b><br/>Choose meals based on lentils, peas, beans, chick peas, tofu, Quorn, soya protein meat substitute, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, pine nuts and other nuts (apart from those listed in opposite box.)</p>   | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Coconut, coconut cream. Limit brazil nuts, cashew nuts. Ready meals containing more than 5g saturated fat per portion.</p>   |
| <p><b>Bread, Cereal, Pasta, Rice</b><br/>Choose any type of bread, rolls, pitta bread, naan bread, bread muffins, bagels, crumpets, teacakes, scotch pancakes, breakfast cereals containing less than 5g saturated fat/100g, porridge, muesli, rice, cous cous, pasta shells, spaghetti, lasagne.</p>     | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Croissants, bought garlic bread, waffles, peshwari naan, taco shells, crunchy oat cereal, foods containing more than 5g saturated fat/100g</p>   |
| <p><b>Biscuits, Baked Goods, &amp; Snacks</b><br/>Choose rice cakes, matzo, crispbread, crumpets, pretzels, malt loaf. The following are generally lower in saturated fat but you should limit quantity eaten- garibaldi, ginger nut, fig rolls, Marie biscuits, oatcakes, unsalted homemade popcorn.</p> | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Danish pastries, shortcake, digestive biscuits, doughnuts, savoury biscuits, poppadum, microwave popcorn, crisps, fried snacks e.g. corn or vegetable snacks, Bombay mix, foods containing more than 5g saturated fat/100g</p> |
| <p><b>Puddings</b><br/>Choose summer pudding, low fat custard, low fat milk pudding, jelly, meringue filled with fruit, low fat ice cream or frozen yoghurt, trifle sponge cakes, fruit (see separate section).</p>   | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Cheesecake, puddings made using suet, mincemeat, pastry, coconut, marzipan, cream or foods containing more than 5g saturated fat/100g</p>  |

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| <p><b>Fats &amp; oils</b><br/>Choose olive-based spreads or one labelled high in unsaturated fat. Olive oil, rapeseed oil or oils high in unsaturated fat can be used in cooking.</p>  | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Butter, lard, dripping, hard baking margarines, suet, vegetable suet, ghee, vegetable ghee, coconut oil, palm oil. Avoid re-using or over-heating any oils. (They should not start smoking)</p>   |
| <p><b>Meat &amp; poultry</b><br/>Choose lean beef, pork, lamb, ham, bacon, rabbit, turkey, chicken, game. Watch portion size as even lean meat contains some saturated fat. Remove poultry skin. Dry fry mince and pour off fat before adding other ingredients to make bolognaise, chilli con carne etc.</p>                                      | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Visible fat on meat or fatty meats such as duck, goose, belly pork, streaky bacon, black pudding, sausages, beefburgers, meat pies, pork pies, salami, pepperoni, luncheon meat, chip shop meals Ready meals containing more than 5g saturated fat per portion.</p> |
| <p><b>Fish</b><br/>Choose oily and white fish - salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel, pilchards, trout, cod, plaice, sole, haddock Shellfish in moderation – prawns, shrimps, lobster, oysters, whelks, scallops, winkles,</p>  | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Fish roes, taramasalata, fish cooked in rich sauces, battered fish from the fish &amp; chip shop.</p>   |
| <p><b>Eggs</b><br/>Limit to 4 egg yolks per week. Egg white can be used freely.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Milk &amp; Yoghurt</b><br/>Use semi-skimmed milk in moderation: ½-1pt per day. If extra milk is wanted, use fully skimmed milk to make custard, sauces, milk pudding. If you are underweight, dried skimmed milk powder can be added to skimmed milk to increase the protein and energy value. Low fat yoghurt or low fat fromage frais.</p> | <p><b>Try to avoid</b><br/>Whole milk or full fat milk, Jersey milk, cream, cream substitutes, evaporated milk, condensed milk, greek yoghurt, full fat yoghurt or full fat fromage frais.</p>   |

### Which foods should I limit if my cholesterol is high?

Any foods which contain a lot of saturated fat. Try to choose foods containing mostly unsaturated fat instead.

### Do all fats and oils contain saturated and unsaturated fat?

Yes. All fats & oils are a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fats in differing proportions. When we say a fat is saturated, we mean that it contains mostly saturated fat and only a little unsaturated fat.

### Which foods contain a lot of saturated fat?

Usually animal products such as butter, lard, suet, ghee, fat on meat, cream, full fat cheese, most biscuits, pies, pastry. Vegetable sources include coconut oil, palm oil, vegetarian suet or ghee.

### Which foods contain a lot of unsaturated fats?

Unsaturated fats can be mono-unsaturated or poly-unsaturated.

*Mono-unsaturated fats* are found in olive oil, rapeseed oil, peanut (groundnut) oil and margarine made from these oils.

*Poly-unsaturated fats* are found in sunflower oil, safflower oil, soya oil, sesame seed oil, corn oil and margarine made from these oils.

### What is Omega-3?

Omega-3 fat is a type of polyunsaturated fat found in oily fish, flax or linseed oil, flaxseeds, rapeseed oil, walnuts and almonds. Taking adequate Omega-3 regularly can help reduce your risk of coronary heart disease.

### What are trans-fats and hydrogenated fats?

These are unsaturated fats which are altered during food processing. They are mainly found in manufactured biscuits, pies, potato crisps, chocolate and deep fried foods. They act in the body in a similar way to saturated fats by increasing LDL cholesterol and reducing HDL cholesterol. It is best to restrict your intake of these fats. Low fat foods will contain very little hydrogenated or trans-fats.

### What helps to increase HDL cholesterol levels?

1. Avoid eating a lot of saturated fat
2. Take adequate aerobic exercise (discuss with your doctor or physiotherapist)

### What helps to decrease LDL cholesterol levels?

1. Take statin medication if it has been prescribed e.g. simvastatin (Zocor) or atorvastatin (Liptor)
2. Maintain a reasonable weight for your height
3. Keep your waist measurements below
  - 94cm (37") for men
  - 90cm (35½ ") for Asian men
  - 80cm (32") for all women
4. Restrict your intake of saturated, hydrogenated and trans-fats. Replace some of this with unsaturated fats.

Following steps 1-4 above will reduce your LDL and total cholesterol significantly. Some people also choose to include foods and drinks containing stanols or sterols which are substances found naturally in plants known to reduce cholesterol. If these are used, it is still important to follow steps 1-4 above. Also, check the product labels for recommended intakes. As an approximate guide, any of the following will provide 1.6-2g of stanols/sterols per day.

- 20-30g fat spread e.g. Flora-Pro-Active or Benecol
- or 1 small mini bottle of yoghurt drink enriched with stanols or sterols
- or 3 servings of foods containing stanols or sterols (milk drink, yoghurt, cheese spread or snack bar).

More than 2g of stanols or sterols per day will not provide any additional benefit and is not recommended. As they may also lower vitamin A levels, ensure that you eat plenty of fruit & vegetables. These products are not suitable if you are pregnant or breastfeeding and are not recommended for children.

### Changing the balance of fats in your diet.

Use the tables on the next 3 pages to help you. It is impossible to cut saturated fat out of your diet completely but you should try to limit your intake as much as possible.

- Foods you eat regularly will have most impact on your cholesterol levels. Occasional special treats or meals have less effect but try not to over-indulge.
- If you go out for meals regularly, choose carefully so that you can still enjoy eating out whilst controlling your cholesterol level.
- Most of the saturated fat in your diet should come from foods which provide valuable nutrients to keep your body and bones healthy. These are mainly lean meat, poultry and low fat dairy products.
- Compare food labels – the lower the saturated fat content the better. Be careful not to eat too many extra biscuits, baked goods and snacks in a day as your total intake of saturated fat will increase.
- If you are trying to lose weight, remember unsaturated fat or oil is just as fattening as butter. See page 8 for further advice.
- If you do not need to lose weight, you can use a suitable oil or margarine to make items such as potato wedges, roast potatoes, roasted vegetables, stuffings, pastry, biscuits, cakes and scones to increase the variety of your diet.
- If you have a genetic condition called familial hyperlipidaemia or hypercholesterolaemia, or you are struggling to lose weight, ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian for additional advice.