

Quick Tips

Quick tips to start a heart healthy diet based on your cholesterol results and blood pressure:

If you have **high triglycerides** and **high blood pressure**:

- **Cut out** sugary drinks (sodas, sweet teas and juices) and drink more water!
- **Cut back by half** of your usual intake of breads, cereals, pastas and rice (example do a half sandwich, or half cup of rice)

If you have **low HDL (good) cholesterol**:

- Start your day off with a high protein breakfast (skip cereal and have a veggie omelet, egg cooked in olive oil, served with avocado slices)



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Who we are

About Us

Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital Nutrition Services is committed to promoting quality of life and well-being to patients in the hospital and to our clients from the local community.

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Our qualified dietitians and nutritionists are contracted by



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Nutrition Services for Cardiac Rehab



How can food affect your heart health?

Food and Your Blood Cholesterol

Abnormal cholesterol levels may foreshadow future heart disease and stroke. **Total cholesterol** is the sum total of the good, bad and neutral cholesterol. Breaking it down can help pinpoint where in your diet you can improve on your cholesterol.

LDL Cholesterol (bad/neutral): normal range is <100mg/dL. LDL cholesterol can be affected by both your sugar (carbohydrate) and fat intake. Ask your doctor to check for your LDL particle size. An elevated number of small LDL or Lp(a) is considered a risk factor for heart health and can be elevated by a high sugar diet. Large LDL is neutral and related to your fat intake.

VLDL Cholesterol (bad): normal range <40mg/dL. reduce your sugar intake to bring your number down.

HDL Cholesterol (good): preferred range to be >60mg/dL. HDL protects your heart by removing excess fatty acids (Triglycerides) from your blood. How can you get your HDL number up? Eating more healthy fats! This includes both plant fats like avocado, nuts and seeds. Cook your food using olive oil (classic/extra-virgin) or coconut oil/butter. Eat healthy animal fats (Yes! Animal fats!) such as organic grass-fed red meats, cage-free eggs (eat the yolk!), and wild fatty fish (salmon, tuna, sardines, anchovies and mackerel).

*“Let food be thy
medicine and medicine
be thy food.”* – Hippocrates

Triglycerides (bad): normal range <150mg/dL. Elevated levels of triglycerides are related to a high sugar (carbohydrate) diet (and sometimes to excess alcohol drinking). More sugar means more triglycerides! **Cut out** completely high sugar drinks like sodas, sweet teas and juices as a start in reducing your numbers!



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Food and Your Blood Pressure

Normal blood pressure is <120/80. Sodium (salt) is an essential mineral that our bodies need, but sugar is **not**! Talk to your doctor about sodium restriction (1 teaspoon salt = 2300mg sodium) and also be sure to review any medications (especially diuretics, like Lasix and Spirolactone) that may result in salt depletion.

A high sugar (carbohydrate) diet can cause elevated blood pressure. Drinking your sugar in the form of sodas, sweet teas and juices not only causes weight gain (which will lead to high blood pressure) but also cause your insulin levels to rise – high insulin levels triggers the kidneys to retain water ultimately leading to water retention that causes high blood pressure. Cut back on sugar, the first weight you lose is water weight – the water you were retaining!

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