Real Life
For PacificSource Members

Lower Your Cholesterol Levels with Smart Food Choices

An estimated one in three Americans has high serum cholesterol. So, what's the big deal if your cholesterol levels are a little high? Although you can't feel high cholesterol, it is a known major risk factor for heart disease. High levels of the unhealthy types of cholesterol (LDL) may lead to clogged arteries and eventually a heart attack or stroke. The healthy cholesterol (HDL) actually works in reverse, clearing out extra cholesterol from the blood.

High cholesterol, which can be diagnosed with a simple blood test, can be genetic, environmental, or both. If you have high cholesterol, your doctor may have prescribed medication and recommended lifestyle changes like diet and exercise. For most of us, taking the medication seems easier than changing the way we eat! However, the foods you eat play an important role in healthy cholesterol levels. This means you have some direct control (and responsibility) over an important part of your health.

So, along with medications prescribed by your doctor, take charge with some of the action steps (page 2) to lower your cholesterol with healthy food choices. What two or three action steps do you want to take today to lower your cholesterol naturally?

See Seven Steps on page 2.

Self-management of Blood Glucose

You've heard your doctor talk about it. You've heard your diabetic educator talk about it. You even hear commercials on TV talk about it. But is checking your blood sugar really that important? Yes. Knowing what your blood sugar is puts you in control of your diabetes. If it's too high or low, you can examine what may have caused this and take action. Whether it's adjusting your medications, giving yourself some insulin, or going for a short walk, YOU are in control.

If you are struggling with this part of your diabetes care, we can help. Do you need a new meter? Contact our Customer Service Department, and we're happy to provide you with a new one. If you are looking for one-on-one support, our nurses can help you along the path of self-managing your diabetes.

Customer Service
Idaho: (800) 688-5008
Montana: (877) 590-1596
Oregon: (888) 977-9299
En Español: (800) 624-6052 ext. 1009
Email: cs@pacificsource.com

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Seven Steps to Successfully Lowering Cholesterol Levels
Goals and Suggested Actions

Your Goal: Increase your daily intake of fiber. Women should get at least 25 grams and men 38 grams per day.
- Try a breakfast casserole with sautéed vegetables and a whole grain, such as quinoa.
- Whip up a veggie scramble with spinach sautéed in healthy oil, Italian seasoning, tomatoes, and green onions mixed into egg whites.
- Enjoy homemade vegetable soups and salads loaded with veggies and legumes.

Your Goal: Eat skinless white poultry, fish, and lean cuts of meat. Avoid any visible fat.
- • Eat skinless white poultry, fish, and lean cuts of meat. Avoid any visible fat.
- • Try a grilled chicken sandwich (with no skin or breading)
- • Choose lean cuts like sirloin, round roast, or 95/5 extra lean ground beef.

Your Goal: Eat fat-free or low-fat dairy products.
- • Replace whole milk dairy products with low-fat (1%) or nonfat versions.
- • Top your baked potato with nonfat sour cream.
- • Cook your oatmeal with nonfat milk.

Your Goal: Make at least one day per week vegetarian.
- • Try a whole grain tortilla filled with beans and corn.
- • Enjoy soups made with legumes, such as split pea, minestrone, or vegetarian chili.
- • Eat high-protein whole grains like quinoa, buckwheat, oats, and wild rice.

Your Goal: Eat healthy fats: olive oil, canola oil, flax seeds, nuts, sunflower seeds, olives, avocados, and unsalted nut or seed butters.
- • Choose a handful of nuts for a snack.
- • Add small amounts of olive and avocado to salads.
- • Make your own oil and vinegar salad dressings.
- • Eat hummus rather than high-fat, creamy dips.

Your Goal: Limit daily added sugar to (no more than 100 calories for women and 150 calories for men).
- • Choose fruit when you want something sweet.
- • Have a small amount of dark chocolate (70% cocoa) with a few almonds.
- • Use ripe, mashed banana to sweeten hot cereal.

My Action Steps
1. 
2. 
3. 

Try our Cilantro Lime Quinoa Bowl Recipe in this issue
Interested in working with a registered nurse and/or registered dietitian?
Learn more at PacificSource.com/member/condition-support-program, or email us at yoursupport@pacificsource.com.

MEMBER CORNER
Set Your Intention and Give Yourself Credit

Although we would all like instant gratification, we are reminded again and again of the truth that consistent, small steps lead to success. Sue began working with her PacificSource Health Coach in March with two main goals — lose some weight and lower her A1C and fasting glucose levels. During the past year she’s made several healthy changes, including planning and tracking her meals and snacks, measuring her steps with an activity tracker, setting daily step goals, and even standing and moving more at work. The efforts have paid off! Sue has lost more than 20 pounds and at a recent doctor appointment her fasting glucose level was the lowest it’s been in over a year.

Sue’s proudest accomplishment is lowering her glucose levels, but what feels best to her is being comfortable in her own skin. She feels lighter, brighter, and even notices her knees don’t bother her much anymore. She has noticed a change in how she feels about herself, and others are noticing as well.

When asked how working with a coach helps, Sue states the process of creating a vision of what she wants for her well-being and why, along with reminders to look at what she has accomplished have been most useful. “It reminds me of what I have accomplished; even when I’m not doing as well as I’d like to be. Having something to work towards — a vision — has been helpful.” She adds, “It’s a lot of work to make a change, and having a clear picture of why I want to make that change is important.” Sue has also discovered that making healthy changes is about much more than losing weight. “It’s about how I want to be in the world and how my health affects who I am.”

Her health coach says “Sue is amazing. She has recognized her strengths and how to use them to her advantage. She takes the time to reflect on her accomplishments, as well as her obstacles — really taking the time to think about where she wants to take her health. That kind of commitment generates success.”

“Having something to work towards — a vision — has been helpful.”
– Sue, program participant

Choose lean cuts of meat.
Top your baked potato with nonfat sour cream.
Cilantro Lime Quinoa Bowl

¾ cup cooked quinoa
½ cup steamed broccoli
½ cup cooked sweet yellow corn
¼ cup canned pinto beans, drained and rinsed
¼ cup (1 ounce) pumpkin seed kernels (pepitas)
4 cherry tomatoes
1-ounce slice avocado

Layer ingredients in a bowl and top with cilantro lime dressing. Makes 1 serving.

Lime Cilantro Dressing

1 cup fat-free Greek yogurt
2 tablespoon mayonnaise
1 cup loosely packed cilantro leaves
2 cloves of garlic (or you can use a pinch of garlic powder if you prefer)
¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
½ tsp. cumin
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. black pepper

Place garlic, cilantro, and lime juice in food processor or blender. Blend until all ingredients are minced. Add the yogurt, cumin, salt, and pepper, and blend until all ingredients are mixed. Makes about 10 servings.