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High cholesterol risk factors

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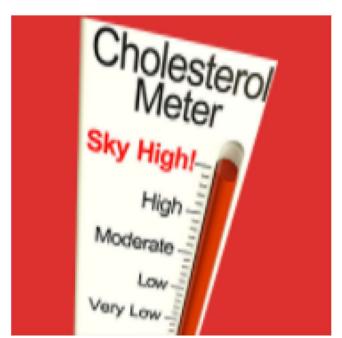
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What are the risk factors for high cholesterol?

There are many risk factors for high cholesterol. It is important to look at your lifestyle and any underlying conditions you may have.



How can I tell if I have high cholesterol?



High cholesterol usually has no symptoms. A blood test assessing your lipid profile is the only way to detect high cholesterol.2

People with rare lipid disorders may present symptoms such as bumps on the skin, hand or feet. These symptoms are commonly caused by a deposition of extra cholesterol and other types of fats.³

When to screen for high cholesterol?



If you are above 20 years old, it is recommended to check your cholesterol. If your test results are normal, your doctor may recommend having follow-up screening tests every 5 years. If your test results are abnormal, your doctor may recommend more frequent measurements. Your doctor may also suggest more frequent tests if you have the risk factors for high cholesterol.²

Read more on how to interpret your test results here.

What is the link between smoking and high cholesterol?



Smoking or inhaling cigarette smoke (second hand smoke) increases the risk of heart and lung diseases in patients who have high cholesterol, high blood pressure and/or diabetes. Smoking lowers the high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, injures the lining of blood vessels and increases the risk of developing atherosclerosis. 4 It is highly beneficial to quit smoking to improve your general health.

What is the link between diabetes and high cholesterol?

If you have diabetes, you need to be even more careful about controlling your cholesterol levels. Diabetes and high cholesterol double your risk of heart disease and stroke. According to the American Diabetes Association guidelines, patients with diabetes have to reach much lower cholesterol targets than those without diabetes.⁵



Cholesterol targets for people with diabetes⁵:

- LDL levels: <2.6 mmol/L
- HDL levels: >1.0 mmol/L (men) or >1.39 mmol/L (women)
- Triglyceride levels: <3.9 mmol/L

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