

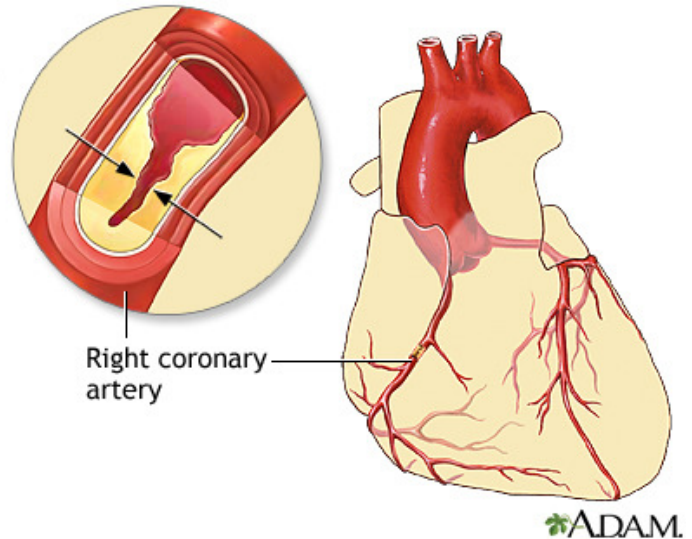
# Cholesterol and Lifestyle

Your body needs cholesterol to work well. But cholesterol levels that are too high can harm you.

Extra cholesterol in your blood builds up inside the walls of your blood vessels. This buildup is called plaque. Plaque reduces, or even stops, the blood flow. This can cause a heart attack, stroke, or other serious heart disease.

Ways to decrease your cholesterol:

- Eating a healthy diet
- Losing weight (if you are overweight)
- Exercising



## Good Cholesterol Diet

Eat foods that are naturally low in fat. These include:

- whole grains
- fruits
- vegetables.

Look at food labels. Avoid foods that are high in saturated fat. Eating too much of this type of fat can lead to heart disease.

- Choose lean protein foods -- soy, fish, skinless chicken, very lean meat, and fat-free or 1% dairy products.
- Look for the words "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated" and trans fats on food labels. Do NOT eat foods with these.
- Limit how much fried foods you eat.
- Limit how many prepared baked goods (such as donuts, cookies, and crackers) you eat. They may contain a lot of fats that are not healthy.
- Eat fewer egg yolks, hard cheeses, whole milk, cream, ice cream, butter, and fatty meats. Eat smaller portions of meats.
- Use healthy ways to cook fish, chicken, and lean meats, such as broiling, grilling, poaching, and baking.
- Eat foods that are high in fiber. Good fibers to eat are oats, bran, split peas and lentils, beans (such as kidney, black, and navy beans), some cereals, and brown rice.

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