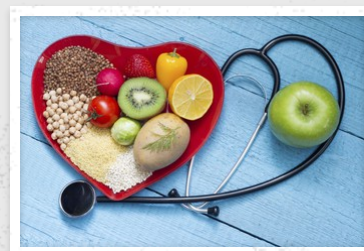


Cholesterol Education Month

September 2019



Cholesterol is a fatty substance that is present in every cell in the body. It supports many essential bodily functions. However, having high levels of LDL cholesterol can increase a person's risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.



High cholesterol usually doesn't have any symptoms. As a result, many people do not know that their cholesterol levels are too high. However, doctors can do a simple blood test to check, and high cholesterol can be controlled through lifestyle changes, or if that's not enough, through medications.

Lifestyle changes can include:

- Eat more fresh fruits and fresh vegetables instead of processed foods and sweets. Leafy greens, yellow squashes, carrots, tomatoes, strawberries, plums, blueberries are all great choices!
- Go with whole grains. Whole grain bread, pastas, and cereals help to prevent a blood sugar roller coaster and make you feel full longer.
- Limit saturated fats. Dietary sources of saturated fats include red meat, pork, chicken with the skin on, butter, cheese and other dairy products, cooking oils such as palm and coconut oil. Substitute healthier unsaturated fats found in fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- Don't substitute sugar for fat in your foods. If you see sugar, corn syrup, or any word ending in "ose" near the top of the list of ingredients, choose a higher-fat version without trans fats instead.
- Regular physical activity raises healthy HDL cholesterol levels and reduces unhealthy LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. People can incorporate regular exercise into their lives by walking, jogging, cycling, or doing resistance exercises with light weights.
- Maintain a healthy weight

- Don't smoke, or quit if you do smoke

Understanding Your Cholesterol Levels

HDL (good) Cholesterol – HDL protects against heart disease by taking the bad cholesterol out of your blood. A good HDL is 60 or more. An HDL level of 60 or above is associated with lower risk of heart disease, and below 40 is associated with a high risk.

LDL (bad) Cholesterol – A low LDL is considered good for your heart. An optimal level is less than 100.

Triglycerides – These are the chemical forms in which more fat exists in food and the body. Your triglyceride numbers are normal if they are less than 150.

The American Heart Association recommends that everyone over the age of 20 should get their cholesterol levels measured at least once every five years.



Grilled Zucchini Roll-Ups

Prep time: 30 minutes; Cook Time: 24 minutes

Makes 4 servings; 80 Calories per serving

Low Carbohydrate, Low Cholesterol, Low Saturated Fat

3 small zucchini, cut lengthwise into $\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick slices

1 tbs. olive oil

1/8 tsp. salt
1/16 tsp. black pepper
1 ½ oz. fresh goat cheese
1 tbs. chopped fresh parsley
½ tsp. fresh lemon juice
2 oz. bagged baby spinach
1/3 cup basil leaves

Preheat grill or grill pan to medium. Discard the outmost slices of zucchini. Sprinkle the zucchini slices with salt and pepper. Grill until tender, about 4 minutes per side.
In a small bowl, combine the goat cheese, parsley, and lemon juice, mashing together with a fork.

Put ½ teaspoon of the cheese mixture about ½ inch from the end of a zucchini slice. Top with a few spinach leaves and a small (or half a large) basil leaf. Roll up and place seam side down on a platter. Repeat with remaining zucchini slices.
You can make these up to a day in advance; store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



**Smile today, learn something new,
and do something nice for someone.**

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