

# Health Bulletin



## What's Your Cholesterol Size?

(NAPSA)—When it comes to cholesterol, doctors now say bigger may be better. Some studies have linked the presence of small, low density LDL cholesterol particles to an increase in coronary heart disease. Medication that increases the LDL particle size may help keep patients healthy.

The news is significant because more than 100 million adults in the United States have blood cholesterol levels considered borderline high (over 200), and close to 40 million adults have levels considered high (over 240).

It's thought that in addition to high cholesterol levels, many of these people have elevated levels of small, low-density LDL cholesterol particles in their blood.

"Although lowering LDL-cholesterol remains the primary goal of lipid management, small, dense LDL-C particles are a significant residual risk factor for cardiovascular disease," says Peter H. Jones MD, study investigator and Associate Professor of Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Jones says that's one reason doctors prescribe drugs such as WelChol® (colesevelam hydrochloride) to cholesterol patients.

The drug, at recommended starting dose, has been shown to not only reduce LDL cholesterol levels, but may also lead to improved particle size distribution.

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**Is bigger better? Studies show increasing the size of certain types of cholesterol particles may decrease a person's risk of coronary heart disease.**



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In addition to learning about medication, doctors recommend people follow a few simple tips.

- If you're over 20, get your blood checked at least once every five years to measure your lipoprotein profile.

- Find fun or interesting ways to exercise—and do them for at least an hour every week.

- Cut saturated fat intake. However, keep in mind some polyunsaturated fats—such as those found in black olives or salmon—are now considered healthy.

For more information, call 1-877-4-SANKYO (1-877-472-6596) or visit [www.welchol.com](http://www.welchol.com).

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*Fair Balance: WelChol® (colesevelam hydrochloride), available by prescription only, effectively lowers LDL cholesterol by an average of 15 to 18 percent (depending on dose) and is the only lipid-lowering agent that is FDA-approved for combination use with any dose of any statin. Administered alone or in combination with a statin, WelChol is indicated along with diet and exercise for the reduction of elevated cholesterol in patients with primary hypercholesterolemia (Fredrickson Type IIa) when diet and exercise alone are not adequate. The effects of WelChol either alone or with a statin on heart disease and heart attack have not been determined. WelChol is non-systemic which means it is not absorbed in the blood stream. In addition, WelChol is well-tolerated. The most common side effects (>five percent) versus placebo (sugar pills) are gas (12 vs. 14 percent), constipation (11 vs. seven percent) and upset stomach (eight vs. three percent). Patients who have bowel blockage should not take WelChol. Also, liver-function monitoring is not required with WelChol and in combination with a statin, no additional liver-function monitoring is required beyond that which is required for the prescribed statin alone. As with all medications, patients should always let their healthcare providers know about the medications and supplements they are taking.*