

Health Bulletin



When It Comes To Cholesterol, You Are More Than What You Eat

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(NAPSA)—How much do you really know about cholesterol? You probably know that foods high in cholesterol, such as eggs and butter, can raise your blood cholesterol level. But did you know that there are two sources of cholesterol? That's right. Cholesterol is absorbed into your blood stream in your intestine from the food you eat and it is also produced naturally in your liver.

That's why understanding what causes high cholesterol requires knowledge about the two sources of cholesterol and the role that diet, exercise and medication can play in helping to maintain healthy cholesterol levels.

How can I lower my cholesterol?

Although a healthy diet and exercise are great ways to help lower cholesterol, many patients still have high cholesterol levels. Even patients taking cholesterol-lowering drugs, like statins, which work in the liver on one source of cholesterol, sometimes haven't lowered their cholesterol enough. In fact, 60 percent of all treated patients continue to have LDL (or bad) cholesterol above recommended levels, which may increase their risk for coronary heart disease—the number one killer in the United States.

Cholesterol levels in the blood are controlled in two important

places: the liver, which produces cholesterol, and the intestine, where cholesterol is absorbed into the blood stream. While many commonly used medications reduce the cholesterol that is produced in your liver, there are also treatments available that work in the digestive tract to help lower cholesterol. Treating both sources of cholesterol is an option for patients to consider in order to reach their recommended cholesterol goals. An important thing that you can do is remember to talk to your doctor to find out what type of treatment, or treatments, if any, are right for you.

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a form of fat or "lipid" found in the blood and all cells of the body. It is critically important in helping to form cell membranes, steroid hormones and bile acids. However, over time, excess LDL cholesterol in the blood can build up on the inner walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart. These deposits form plaque, which can cause the arteries to narrow, making them less efficient at transporting blood. This condition, called atherosclerosis, restricts blood flow, which can result in heart attack.

For more information on the two sources of cholesterol and available treatment options, visit www.2cholesterolsources.com.