

5 FOODS THAT FIGHT BAD CHOLESTEROL

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Eating is one of life's pleasures. It's a social event with time and preparation spent with family and friends. However, we now know that it is easy to eat your way to an alarmingly high cholesterol level, and the reverse is true as well. Making wise changes in what you eat can lower your cholesterol and improve the composition of the many different types of fats floating through your bloodstream. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and "good fats" are all part of a heart-healthy diet. Still, there are some foods that are particularly good at helping bring down bad cholesterol levels and we list the top five below.


CERTAIN FOODS LOWER CHOLESTEROL AND BAD FATS

Certain foods high in fiber can literally bind cholesterol in the digestive tract. This keeps cholesterol from entering the blood stream where it does the most damage. Other dietary interventions include adding polyunsaturated fats (omega-3 fatty acids), which directly supports the lowering of LDL, or "bad" cholesterol. Some foods have plant sterols and stanols (substances that occur naturally in small amounts in many grains, vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, and seeds) which also keeps the body from absorbing cholesterol.

These are the top five healthy foods that may help lower bad cholesterol:

- **1 OATS**

An easy way to start lowering cholesterol is to choose oatmeal or an oat-based cold cereal for breakfast. It gives you one to two grams of soluble fiber. Add a banana or some strawberries for another half-gram. Try to aim for five to 10 grams or more of soluble fiber a day to decrease your LDL cholesterol levels.
- **2 BEANS**

Beans are especially rich in soluble fiber. They also take time for the body to digest, meaning you feel fuller for longer after a meal, and it's a useful food for those trying to lose weight. There are many choices (navy, pinto and kidney beans, lentils, garbanzos, black-eyed peas and split green peas). There are also many ways to prepare them. Get creative and use them in salads, soups, as a side dish or a full meal.
- **3 NUTS**

Countless studies show eating almonds, walnuts, peanuts and other nuts is good for the heart. Eating two ounces of nuts a day can slightly lower LDL by about 5 percent. Nuts have additional nutrients that protect the heart in other ways, like possibly reducing your risk of developing blood clots that can cause a fatal heart attack. They also seem to support improving the health of the lining of your arteries.



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STEROLS AND STANOLS

Sterols and stanols extracted from plants also affect the body's ability to absorb cholesterol from food. They look similar to the chemical structure of cholesterol in that they travel through your digestive tract. They can prevent bad cholesterol from being absorbed into your bloodstream. Instead of clogging up your arteries, the cholesterol just goes out with the waste.



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FATTY FISH

Eating fatty fish two or three times a week can lower LDL in two ways: by replacing meat, which has LDL-boosting saturated fats, and by delivering LDL-lowering omega-3 fats. Omega-3s reduce triglycerides in the bloodstream and also protect the heart by helping prevent the onset of abnormal heart rhythms. The highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids found in fish are in mackerel, lake trout, herring, sardines, albacore tuna, salmon and halibut.

ADD OMEGA+++ TO YOUR DIET

Busy people who are constantly on-the-go often do not eat fatty fish as much as they should. Working moms and dads, singles, and all categories of people both young and old, often eat on the run because food preparation takes time. Adding OMEGA+++ to your daily supplement regimen is quick and easy. Taking supplements in the morning or during lunch with water or tea can help give your heart the advantage it needs.

Studies show that the synthesis of triglycerides and Very Low Density Lipoprotein (VLDL)—both bad fats—in the liver is greatly reduced by omega-3 fatty acids. Also, the time it takes to produce and breakdown VLDL is shortened. In one study, LDL production was decreased.¹ Combined with other dietary manipulations, such as a reduction in saturated fat and dietary cholesterol, the use of omega-3 fatty acids helps support the lowering of bad fats and appears to have a positive influence. Fish oil combined with a low-cholesterol, low-saturated fat diet has been shown to produce complementary effects.¹

Total blood cholesterol levels and LDL cholesterol were reduced by the low-cholesterol, low-saturated fat diet, whereas the blood triglyceride and VLDL were decreased by the fish oil. Many doctors suggest that in most situations, the use of fish oil supplements should be regarded as a positive influence towards helping to support the maintenance of lower blood fats.¹ However, a lifelong diet rich in fish may be protective against plaque buildup in the heart as well.¹

The lowering of bad fats by omega-3 fatty acids coupled with their other known heart health benefits (if other factors are functioning correctly), appears to have an important potential role in supporting heart health and circulation.¹

COQ10 IS A BENEFIT OF OMEGA+++

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is very much like a vitamin and is the co-factor necessary for the mitochondria (an organelle found in large numbers in most cells) to produce energy. The heart muscle and the liver are especially abundant in mitochondria. The heart muscle pumps constantly with no rest periods. The benefit of CoQ10 Extended Release in the OMEGA+++ formula is that it is designed to stay in the body for 24 hours, which increases bioavailability of the nutrient. Since CoQ10 supports the mitochondria, supplementing with this coenzyme helps to support heart cell functioning.



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REFERENCES

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