



YW4

YOUR WELL-BEING

The Role of Food and Your Health: Cholesterol and Blood Sugar

Time: 70 Minutes

Join us to discover how nutritious and tasty foods can positively impact your health, in particular your cholesterol and blood sugar. Receive guidance on how to set personal goals and determine simple, actionable steps you can add to your everyday routine.

OBJECTIVES:

Understand how food affects your body's cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Identify at least two strategies each for controlling cholesterol and blood sugar.

Meet with a health care professional to obtain personal cholesterol and blood sugar measurements.

SETUP

- Review resource list and print it out. Purchase all necessary supplies after reviewing the [HFL Cost Calculator](#).
- Set up stations for participant cholesterol and blood sugar measurements.
- Contact health care professionals in advance to ask them to attend the lesson event. They'll be taking the participants' cholesterol and blood sugar readings and briefly discussing the results with them.
- Provide computer, internet access, and projector, if available.

INTRO (10 Minutes)

- Welcome participants and introduce yourself.
- Take care of any housekeeping items (closest bathroom, water fountain, etc.).
- Give a brief description of the educational experience.
- Engage in an icebreaker to gauge topic knowledge from the bank of options provided in the [Welcome Toolkit](#).

DEMO (10 Minutes)

- Play video(s) or demonstrate content (see demo script).

ACTIVITY (20 Minutes)

- Participants will meet one-on-one with health care professionals to talk about their cholesterol and blood sugar numbers and develop a plan of action.

RECAP (10 Minutes)

- Pass out handout(s) and review with participants.

GOAL SETTING/CLOSING (20 Minutes)

- Engage in a goal setting activity from the bank of options provided in the [Welcome Toolkit](#). Pass out the Setting SMART Goals handout to participants.
- Thank participants and encourage them to join the next activity. (Provide date/time/location if known.)



NOTES: Read legal liability disclaimer before activity: [Food Liability Disclaimer](#). Refer to Resource List for all necessary supplies and handouts. This Healthy for Life® Educational Experience was created by Aramark and the American Heart Association as part of our Healthy for Life® 20 By 20 Initiative. We are proud to be working together to help improve the health of all Americans.

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The Role of Food and Your Health: Cholesterol and Blood Sugar Resource List

HANDOUTS/VIDEOS

Find these resources on AHA's YouTube channel or heart.org/healthyforgood

- Video – [The Role of Food and Your Health: Cholesterol demo](#)
- Video – [The Role of Food and Your Health: Blood Sugar demo](#)
- Video – [Facts on Fats](#)
- Recipe – [Creamy Chicken Curry](#)

Find these resources in this lesson

- Handout – [Life's Simple 7: How to Control Cholesterol](#)
- Handout – [Life's Simple 7: How to Manage Blood Sugar](#)
- Handout – [Sip Smarter](#) (Optional)
- Handout – [Setting SMART Goals](#)

SPACE SETUP

- Chairs and tables for participants
- Pens for participants
- Folders
- Computer, internet access and projector, if available

ACTIVITY SUPPLIES*

- Finger stick tests
- Blank index cards (for health care professional to write down cholesterol and blood sugar measurements for participants)
- Pens

*Purchase appropriate number of supplies for your participants. Coordinate supplies for cholesterol and blood sugar measurement with local health care provider.

The Role of Food and Your Health: Cholesterol and Blood Sugar Demo Script

Use if video capabilities are unavailable.



SAY:

It may surprise you to know that cholesterol itself isn't bad. In fact, cholesterol is just one of the many substances created and used by our bodies to keep us healthy!



So what is cholesterol exactly and where does it come from? Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like substance found in the bloodstream and in all your body's cells. Your body makes all the cholesterol it needs. There are two types of cholesterol: HDL, or good cholesterol, and LDL, or bad cholesterol. HDL cholesterol is good because it carries harmful cholesterol out of the arteries and helps protect you from heart attack and stroke. LDL cholesterol is bad because if you have too much, it can begin to build up in the inner walls of your arteries. They can become clogged and narrow, reducing blood flow to your heart and brain.



To keep your cholesterol in check, make healthy lifestyle choices at all stages of your life. Eating a healthy diet and engaging in regular physical activity are both very important. With cholesterol, remember to **check** and know your numbers, **change** your diet and lifestyle and **control** your levels with your health care provider's help, if needed.



Here are some key tips for success to help keep your cholesterol levels in check.



Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes and fish while reducing your intake of saturated fat, processed meats, refined carbohydrates and sugar-sweetened beverages.



Understanding all types of fat will also help you choose which to include or eliminate from your healthy diet.

- Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are the "good fats" that can help lower bad cholesterol levels and your risk of heart disease and stroke. They provide essential fats that your body needs but can't produce itself.
- Saturated fats can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. Replace saturated fats in your diet with good fats when possible.

- Hydrogenated oils and trans fats negatively affect cholesterol levels and increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes.



The AHA recommends eating a healthy dietary pattern that:

- Includes good, unsaturated fats
- Limits saturated fats
- And keeps trans fats as low as possible



Get at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity, or a combination of both, preferably spread throughout the week.



Add moderate- to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity (such as resistance or weights) on at least 2 days per week.



Did you know you can lower the risk of both diabetes and heart disease by controlling your blood sugar? Heart disease and stroke are the No. 1 killers among people with Type 2 diabetes.



Blood sugar (glucose) is an important fuel for your body. Diabetes is a condition that makes your blood sugar level rise. The hormone insulin helps control blood sugar levels. If the level becomes too high or drops too low, your body can have trouble producing the insulin it needs to stay healthy. When your body doesn't produce enough insulin or doesn't efficiently use the insulin it makes, your blood sugar may become too high. Your body's cells won't be able to use the sugar in your blood and they may become starved for energy. Over time, high blood sugar levels can damage your eyes, kidneys, nerves or heart.



You can lower your blood sugar by making better beverage and food choices. For example, replace sugary beverages, such as full-calorie sodas, with plain, sparkling or infused water. Sugar-sweetened beverages (like sodas, energy drinks and sweetened tea) are the number one source of added sugars in our diet. Just one can of a regular soda (12 ounces) has around 10 teaspoons of added sugar! Try to make healthy beverage and food choices, control your portion sizes and read nutrition facts labels carefully (look for the amount of added sugar in foods).

The Role of Food and Your Health: Cholesterol and Blood Sugar Activity Script



SAY:

Today, you're going to meet with a health care professional to learn your cholesterol and blood sugar levels. To ensure your privacy, the professional will write down your measurements. You'll also learn the AHA's recommendations for both cholesterol and blood sugar levels. However, we recommend you visit with your own health care provider for more guidance.



American Heart Association.
Healthy for Good™



HOW TO CONTROL CHOLESTEROL

1 UNDERSTAND CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that comes from two sources: **FOOD** and **BODY**. It is found in foods from animal sources only. It travels in the body by lipoproteins (LDL and HDL).



HDL = GOOD

High-density lipoprotein is known as "good" cholesterol.



LDL = BAD

Low-density lipoprotein is known as "bad" cholesterol.

HDL helps keep LDL from sticking to artery walls and reduces plaque buildup. This process can lower the risk of heart disease and stroke. heart.org/Atherosclerosis

TRIGLYCERIDES

The most common type of fat in the body.

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL

HDL + LDL + 1/5th of triglyceride level = **total cholesterol level.**

2 TRACK LEVELS



A health care provider can measure blood cholesterol and help you understand what the levels mean.



Track your cholesterol levels over time and take steps to reduce high cholesterol.

LEARN MORE AT HEART.ORG/MYLIFECHECK AND HEART.ORG/CHOLESTEROL

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3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS



EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins and fish. Limit sugary drinks and foods, fatty or processed meats, full-fat dairy products, eggs and tropical oils. heart.org/EatSmart



MOVE MORE

Physical activity helps improve cholesterol levels. heart.org/MoveMore



KNOW YOUR FATS

The fats you eat can affect your cholesterol levels. Replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats. heart.org/Fats



DON'T SMOKE

Smoking lowers good HDL cholesterol and raises your risk of heart disease. heart.org/Tobacco



TAKE MEDICATION AS DIRECTED

Your doctor may prescribe statins or other medications to control your cholesterol levels.



HOW TO MANAGE BLOOD SUGAR

1 UNDERSTAND BLOOD GLUCOSE

The first step to managing your blood sugar is to understand what makes blood sugar levels rise. heart.org/Diabetes

GLUCOSE INSULIN

The carbohydrates and sugars in what you eat and drink turns into glucose (sugar) in the stomach and digestive system. Glucose can then enter the bloodstream.

Insulin is a hormone made in the pancreas that helps the body's cells take up glucose from blood and lower blood sugar levels.

In type 2 diabetes glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells because:

The body develops "insulin resistance" and can't use the insulin it makes efficiently.



The pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce insulin.



The result can be a high blood glucose level.



2 TRACK LEVELS

Health care providers can take blood glucose readings and provide recommendations. If you're diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, you will need to monitor your blood sugar level regularly. Know Diabetes by Heart can help you manage type 2 diabetes.

KnowDiabetesbyHeart.org

Fasting Blood Glucose	Diagnosis	What It Means
Lower than 100 mg/dl	Normal	Healthy range
100 to 125 mg/dl	Prediabetes (Impaired Fasting Glucose)	At increased risk of developing diabetes
126 mg/dl or higher	Diabetes Mellitus (type 2 diabetes)	At increased risk of heart disease or stroke

LEARN MORE AT HEART.ORG/MYLIFECHECK AND HEART.ORG/DIABETES

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3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS



EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, lean proteins and fish. Limit sweetened drinks, added sugars, fatty foods, processed meats and sodium. heart.org/EatSmart



MOVE MORE

Being physically active can lower your risk of developing diabetes and help you manage the disease if you already have it. heart.org/MoveMore



MANAGE WEIGHT

Stay at a healthy weight to help prevent, delay or manage diabetes. heart.org/Weight



DON'T SMOKE

Smoking, vaping or using tobacco can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, many cancers and other chronic diseases. It may also make prediabetes and diabetes harder to manage. heart.org/Tobacco



Healthy For Good™

SIP SMARTER

Replace sweetened drinks to cut back on added sugars and empty calories.

REPLACE SUGARY BEVERAGES...

- full-calorie soft drinks
- energy/sports drinks
- sweetened "enhanced water" drinks
- sweet tea
- sweetened coffee drinks

WITH BETTER CHOICES!

- The best thing you can drink is water! Try it plain, sparkling or naturally flavored with fruit or herbs.
- Drink coffee and tea without added sugars for a healthier energy boost.
- For adults, diet drinks may help replace high-calorie sodas and other sugary drinks.

THE FACTS MAY SURPRISE YOU.

Most Americans consume nearly **20 TEASPOONS** of added sugars **EACH DAY.**

That's more than **TRIPLE** the recommended daily limit for women and **DOUBLE** for men!

Sugar-sweetened beverages like soda and energy/sports drinks are the

#1 SOURCE OF ADDED SUGARS IN OUR DIET.

A can (12 FL OZ) of regular soda has about **150 CALORIES AND 10 TEASPOONS** of added sugar.

TRY THESE TIPS TO QUENCH YOUR THIRST WITH LESS ADDED SUGARS



START CUTTING BACK.

Take steps to reduce or replace sugary drinks in your diet:

REPLACE most of your drinks with water.

REDUCE the amount of sugar in your coffee or tea gradually until your taste adjusts to less sweetness.

ADD plain or sparkling water to drinks to keep some of the flavor with less added sugars per servings.



CHOOSE WATER.

Make water the easy, more appealing go-to choice:

CARRY a refillable water bottle.

ADD a splash of 100% fruit juice or slices of citrus, berries and even cucumbers for a boost of flavor.

TRY seltzer, club soda or sparkling water if you crave the fizz.



MAKE IT AT HOME.

Family favorites like hot chocolate, lemonade, smoothies, fruit punch, chocolate milk and coffee drinks easily can be made at home with less added sugars.

START WITH UNSWEETENED beverages, then flavor to taste with additions like fruit, low-fat or fat-free milk, and herbs and spices.

Get great recipes for beverages and more at HEART.ORG/RECIPES.



READ THE LABEL, AND CHOOSE WISELY.

Some drinks that appear to be healthy may be high in calories and added sugars. Check servings per container and ingredients list.

Added sugars go by many names, including sucrose, glucose, maltose, dextrose, high fructose corn syrup, cane syrup, concentrated fruit juice, agave nectar and honey.

EAT SMART ADD COLOR MOVE MORE BE WELL

FOR MORE TIPS ON HEALTHY EATING, COOKING AND RECIPES: HEART.ORG/EATSMART

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SPECIFIC

- What exactly do you want to accomplish?

MEASURABLE

- How will you track your progress towards your goal?

ACHIEVABLE

- Is reaching your goal possible with your full effort?

REALISTIC

- Do you have the resources and ability to achieve your goal?
If not, how can you get them?

TIME-BOUND

- When will your goal be achieved?

EXAMPLE OF A SMART GOAL:

I will increase the number of fruit servings I eat daily by 2 cups within the next 3 months.

Personal SMART goal:
