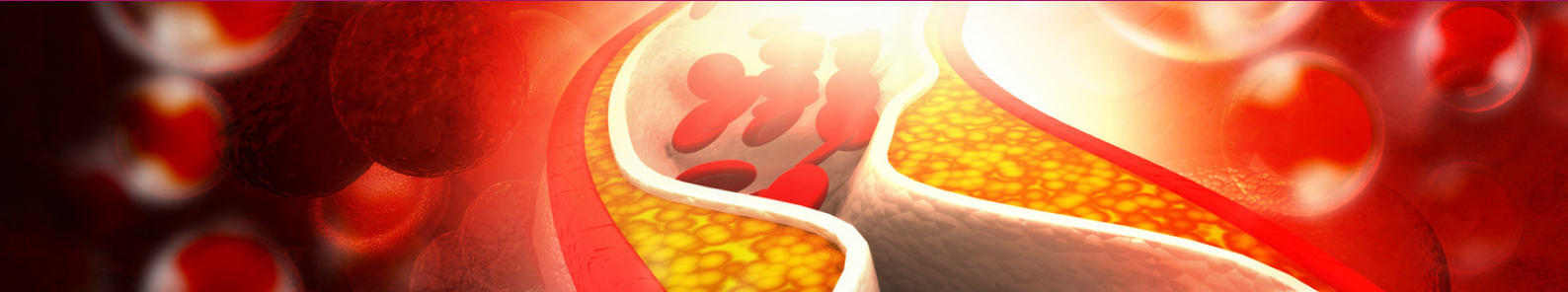


What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a family of fatty substances found in your blood and collectively known as lipoproteins.



Cholesterol is a fatty substance carried in your blood by proteins. When cholesterol and proteins combine, they're called lipoproteins. Everyone has cholesterol and we need a certain amount to stay healthy because it plays an essential role in our body, preserving cell membranes, insulating nerve fibres and producing hormones. However, it is important that cholesterol levels remain within healthy parameters and do not become elevated. The majority of the cholesterol in our body, c.70-80%, is naturally produced in the liver, with just one third coming from the food we eat. There are different types of cholesterol. High-density lipoproteins (HDL), the more beneficial cholesterol. Non-high-density lipoproteins (non-HDL), including LDL, which is considered more harmful cholesterol when elevated. And finally another type of fat called triglycerides. High levels of cholesterol in the blood can be harmful because it sticks to the inside walls of your arteries, and increases your risk factors of circulatory diseases, and metabolic dysregulation.

Cholesterol Levels

What are desired cholesterol levels?

Cholesterol levels vary from person to person, but in general the lower the LDL and non-HDL, and higher the HDL, the better. Your blood cholesterol is measured in mmol/L, which stands for millimoles per litre.

NHS healthy parameters are given as (2):

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------|
| • Total cholesterol | - 5 or below | • Non-HDL cholesterol) | - 4 or below |
| • HDL cholesterol | - 1 or above | • Triglycerides | - 2.3 or below |
| • LDL cholesterol | - 3 or below | | |

Diet & Nutrition

Diet and Lifestyle support for High Cholesterol

The foods we eat play an important role in supporting our long-term health and wellbeing. The major factors in the diet that may increase blood cholesterol levels are excessive intakes of saturated fats, and excessive calories (notably glucose). Dietary approaches to support hypercholesterolemia (high cholesterol levels) include modulation of macronutrient composition and energy restriction. BANT nutrition practitioners assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances to understand how these may contribute to an individual's symptoms and health concerns and make personalised recommendations.



1. <https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/risk-factors/high-cholesterol>
2. High cholesterol - Cholesterol levels - NHS (www.nhs.uk)