

High Cholesterol

What is High Cholesterol (Hypercholesterolaemia)?

Hypercholesterolaemia is the presence of abnormally high levels in the blood of cholesterol and triglycerides (a type of fat in the blood used for energy) that can lead to obstruction of blood flow in the arteries. This inhibits blood flow to the brain, kidneys, genitals, heart and other areas of the body. Cholesterol is considered high if it is greater than 5mmol/l.

Signs and Symptoms

High cholesterol has no symptoms. A blood test is the only way to detect whether you have it or not.

Complications

Angina pectoris, transient ischaemic attacks (mini-strokes), deteriorating kidney function, low exercise tolerance, atherosclerosis and heart attack.

What Causes High Cholesterol?

Poor lifestyle behaviours such as physical inactivity and unhealthy diet are responsible for increasing LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and decreasing HDL (“good”) cholesterol levels in the blood. However, other factors such as genetic/ temperament may prevent the removal of LDL cholesterol from the blood, so causing the liver to produce too much cholesterol.

Risk factors include:

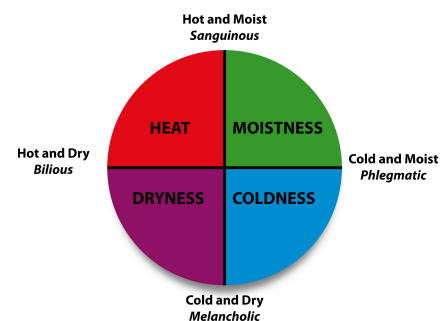
- **Diet** – An excessively cold diet, hydrogenated fats like margarine, processed and refined foods.
- Poor **liver** function.
- Low production of **bile** (in the **gall bladder**) which is produced by the liver to aid digestion of fats.
- **Lack of Exercise** - Regular physical exercise increases HDL levels, so assisting the removal of LDL.

The Tibb View on High Cholesterol

According to Tibb, high cholesterol results due to **excessive coldness**. This lack of heat impairs blood circulation and allows saturated fats to gather in the blood vessels.

This results in fatty plaques being deposited inside the vessel walls. The arterial bore or lumen narrows, and this reduces blood circulation even further. The reduced blood circulation increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Individuals with a melancholic dominant/sub-dominant temperament are innately more susceptible to developing high cholesterol due to their inherent **cold and dry** nature. However, due to a faulty diet and improper lifestyle, other temperaments can also develop high cholesterol. People with sanguinous



temperaments, who indulge in over-eating and lead a sedentary lifestyle, may also develop high cholesterol. Phlegmatic individuals are also at risk, as they have innate qualities of **coldness** and sluggish metabolism linked to their temperament.

Management of High Cholesterol

Treatment and management is aimed at **reducing the excess coldness with dryness** associated with high cholesterol, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will **increase the quality of heat**. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms, and the causes of high cholesterol.

Tibb Lifestyle Factors

Food and Drink

- Eat **mostly Hot & Moist foods** – such as olive oil, ginger, turmeric and spinach **followed by Hot & Dry foods** – like oily fish, chicken, celery and garlic.
- Eat **less of Cold & Moist foods** – such as cucumber, broccoli, milk, and sprouts and the **least amount of Cold & Dry foods** – like citrus fruit, yogurt and beef.
- Add fresh garlic to meals where appropriate. Garlic is commonly used in the management of conditions of the heart and circulatory system and is indicated for hypertension and high cholesterol. Other heating herbs and spices like chilli, turmeric and ginger should be added to meals. These help in lowering blood cholesterol and promoting better blood circulation.
- Avoid eating and drinking refrigerated foods and drinks. Allow the food to reach room temperature before consumption.
- Reduce the intake of red meat like beef. Chicken and oily fish like tuna and salmon are preferred.
- Include the following cholesterol lowering foods in your diet: almonds, bananas, garlic, oats, olive oil, salmon, and walnuts.
- Water soluble dietary fibre is important for reducing serum cholesterol. It is present in barley, brown rice, fruits, and oats.
- Use vegetable oils which are liquids at room temperature such as olive and flaxseed oil. Boiled/steamed/grilled chicken and fish should be preferred.
- Eat only raw unsalted nuts, especially pecan, almonds and walnuts. Almonds are rich in the amino acid arginine which has cholesterol-lowering properties.
- Reduce the amount of saturated fats and cholesterol-containing foods in your diet. Saturated fats include coconut and palm oil. Eliminate hydrogenated fats and hardened fats such as margarine and butter.
- Avoid pork or pork-containing products, fried and fatty foods.
- Do not consume alcohol, cakes, candy, carbonated drinks, coffee, gravies, pies, processed or refined foods, refined carbohydrates, tea, tobacco or white bread.
- Drink at least 2 litres of warm water a day.

Other Lifestyle Advice

- Regular physical exercise such as brisk walking should be carried out several times weekly.
- Quit smoking as this contributes to the hardening of the arteries.

Herbal Remedies

- Turmeric - Add ¼ to ½ tsp to rice or couscous.
- Mix ¼ teaspoon red chillies, ½ teaspoon ginger root, 3 black pepper and 4 garlic cloves as chutney. Take this with meals 3 times a day.
- Take 1tbsp *psyllium* husk/whole seeds mixed in 1 cup of water.
- Make an infusion using 2tsp fennel seed with 20 mint leaves in 1 cup of boiling water.

Hot & Dry Foods

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes	
all small bird meat	bitter melon	avocado	cashews	celery seeds	eggs	mustard oil	aniseed	alcohol	pungent and bitter flavourants	chilli sauce			spicy dishes	
	celery	grapes		hazelnuts			chickpeas	cinnamon		grape juice				mustard sauce
	green pepper			pecan nuts			fenugreek seeds	cloves, garlic		herbal teas (see herbs)				peri-peri sauce
	lobsters			leek			walnuts	gram flour		green/red chilli				
	mackerel			onion				mustard seeds		fenugreek				
	oily fish			red pepper				popad		lavender				
	pilchards			yellow pepper						nutmeg				
	prawns									oregano				
	sardines									paprika				
					parsley									
				rocket, rosemary										
				saffron										
				tarragon										

Hot & Moist Foods

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes	
buck	artichokes	bananas	almonds	bread	clarified butter	castor oil	bay leaves	green tea	honey	mayonnaise	biscuits	all bran flakes	sweet dishes	
goat	asparagus	dates	brazil nuts	bulgar wheat	condensed milk	olive oil	black pepper	hot water	molasses		cakes	bran		
goose	olives	guavas	pistachios	flour	cheese	sunflower oil	cayenne pepper	juices (see fruits)	salt		chocolate	honey smaks		
lamb	spinach	mangoes	apricot kernels	pasta	cream cheese		chives	herbal teas (see herbs)	sugar		liquorice	muesli		
liver	spring onion	peaches		rye bread	mother's milk (for babies)		ginger, fennel	green masala				vermicelli		nutri-k
mutton	sweet potato	papaya		sunflower seeds				marjoram						nutrific
turkey	turnips			wheat	fresh cream			mint, sage						oats
				macaroni				soya sauce						puffed wheat
			dill seeds				thyme, turmeric					taystee wheat		
							watercress					weetbix		
							white pepper							