

# *Understanding* **Cholesterol***cont.*

## What is LDL cholesterol?

- ◆ LDL means low-density lipoprotein.
- ◆ L stands for “lousy” cholesterol. A low LDL number is desirable.
- ◆ LDL is the main carrier of harmful cholesterol in the blood.
- ◆ High LDL = increased risk of heart attack and stroke.
- ◆ The desired LDL level is < 100 mg/dL.

## What is HDL cholesterol?

- ◆ HDL means high-density lipoprotein.
- ◆ H stands for “happy” cholesterol. A high HDL is desirable.
- ◆ HDL carries the cholesterol away from the arteries and back to the liver, where it's passed from the body.
- ◆ High HDL = decreased risk for heart disease (>60).
- ◆ Low HDL = increases risk of heart disease (<40).

## What are triglycerides?

- ◆ Major energy source for the body.
- ◆ Comes from food and the body makes them.
- ◆ Level > 150 mg/dL = increased risk for heart disease.

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# *Understanding Cholesterol*

## What is it?

- ◆ Cholesterol is a soft, waxy substance found in the blood stream and cells.
- ◆ It is used to form cell membranes, some hormones and other tissues.

## Where do we get it?

- ◆ Our bodies form cholesterol, mainly in the liver.
- ◆ It is absorbed in the body from foods high in saturated fat & cholesterol — meats, poultry, fish and dairy products.

## Why is too much unhealthy?

- ◆ When elevated, cholesterol and other fatty substances collect in the inner walls of the blood vessels, leading to restricted blood flow to the heart.
- ◆ This buildup is associated with coronary artery disease and can lead to a heart attack.

## How much is recommended?

- ◆ Less than 300 mg of cholesterol consumed per day.
- ◆ Total cholesterol: < 200 mg/dL.

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