

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DYSLIPIDEMIA

In the Clinic
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What Is Dyslipidemia (High Cholesterol)?

- Lipids are fatty substances in your blood. These substances are called cholesterol and triglycerides. It is normal to have some fats in your blood.
- Sometimes the levels of fats in your blood can get too high. This is called dyslipidemia or high cholesterol.
- When you have too many fats in your blood, they can build up and clog the blood vessels in your heart. This can cause heart attack, stroke, and other diseases.

What Are the Risk Factors?

You may be at higher risk for dyslipidemia if you:

- Are older than 65 years of age
- Have a family history of dyslipidemia
- Are a smoker
- Eat an unhealthy diet
- Drink alcohol very frequently
- Do not exercise
- Are a person with high blood pressure, obesity, or diabetes

How Is It Diagnosed?

Your doctor will ask you questions about your current health and health history.

- You may also get a physical exam.
- Your health care provider will give you a blood test to check fat levels in your blood. This test may require you to not eat for a few hours.

How Is It Treated?

Your doctor will work with you to create a plan for your treatment. One part of your treatment will include making healthy changes, such as:

- Eating a heart-healthy diet
- Getting regular exercise
- Quitting smoking
- Losing weight if needed



Sometimes lifestyle changes aren't enough.

There are several medicines available that help lower the fat levels in your blood. Many people are prescribed one of several medicines called statins. You and your doctor should work together to decide what medicine is right for you.

Should I Be Screened?

- In general, women 45 years or older and men 35 years or older should be screened regularly.
- You may be screened at a younger age if you have certain risk factors or family history of dyslipidemia.

Questions for My Doctor

- Do I need to be screened for dyslipidemia?
- What is the healthiest diet for me to eat?
- Are there foods that I should not eat?
- What is the best form of exercise for me?
- What is the best medicine for me?
- Does the medicine have side effects?
- Will this medicine interact with my other medicines?

For More Information



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National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/resources/heart/heart-cholesterol-hbc-what.html

Medline Plus

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000403.htm>