



Heart & Vascular Institute

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Conditions We Treat: High Cholesterol (Hyperlipidemia)

High cholesterol is too much blood cholesterol, particularly that stored in low-density lipoprotein (LDL). Although the body needs some cholesterol to function, the liver manufactures the required amount on its own. Poor diet and lack of exercise increase LDL, which delivers some of this fatty substance to the blood vessels, leading to [atherosclerosis](#).

High Cholesterol: What You Need to Know

- Cholesterol levels must be managed over a lifetime, because a lifetime of fatty deposits in the arteries leads to cardiovascular disease, the number one killer in America.
- The goal of your treatment is to lower LDL and triglycerides, another fatty substance in the blood, while raising HDL (high-density lipoprotein), which helps remove LDL from the bloodstream.
- Lifestyle changes, such as exercising and altering your diet, is sometimes sufficient to treat your high cholesterol. Your doctor may also prescribe medication.
- High cholesterol is just one of several [risk factors for heart disease](#).



There are many names for what we commonly call high cholesterol. You may also encounter the terms **hypercholesterolemia** (too much cholesterol), **hyperlipidemia** (too many fats) or **dyslipidemia** (the wrong ratio of good and bad fats).

Patient Resources

[Learn more about high cholesterol in our Health Library.](#)

Scientists' understanding of cholesterol has evolved. [Watch an online health seminar: Cholesterol — The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.](#)

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Why choose Johns Hopkins Heart and Vascular Institute for treatment of high cholesterol?