



At Home Basics for Improving Your Cholesterol

The Basic Steps:

1) **Increase Your Fiber (-5-10%)**: Get 20 grams daily, half soluble, half insoluble.

More fiber is better, work up toward 40 grams and more as you get used to it. Soluble fiber is the kind that makes cooked oatmeal sticky. Insoluble fiber is what people call “roughage”.

2) **Eat Foods High in Plant Sterols (-10%)**: You want at least 2 grams every day.

Sterols are the plant version of cholesterol. They trick your body into making less cholesterol. See below.

3) **Eat Nuts (-8%)**: Copious research shows eating nuts lowers cholesterol.

Eat 1 or 2 servings of nuts daily, especially as snacks. Moderation is the key with nuts. They are high in calories and fat, but they are good for you.

***Of course, do not eat nuts if you have a nut allergy.*

4) **Eat Soy Protein (-3-10%)**: The more you replace meat with soy the better.

The average person needs around 50 grams of protein per day. Research shows that protein from soy lowers bad cholesterol and other bad fats.

***Of course, do not eat soy if you have a soy allergy.*

5) **Eat Fish**: Eating 2 servings per week of oily, cold water fish improves your fats.

The effect is more on triglycerides than on cholesterol. The effect comes from the essential fatty acids (EFAs) in fish, but there are many other sources of EFAs.

6) General Diet (-10%): Many types of diet have a major impact on cholesterol.

Get less than 30% of your daily calories from fat.

Get less than 7-10% of your daily calories from saturated fat.

Get less than 200 - 300mg of cholesterol in your diet every day.

Making it Easier:

Ways to accomplish many of these goals at the same time:

Nuts: Nuts lower cholesterol and are high in fiber and plant sterols. One serving of pistachio nuts is 1 ounce, 49 kernels (about 30 grams). It has about 100mg of plant sterols, almost 3 grams of fiber and only 158 calories.

Seeds: Four tablespoons of ground flax seed have about 100mg of plant sterols, 7.6 grams of fiber and only 148 calories and 1.2 grams of saturated fat. Eat 4-8 tablespoons of ground flax per day; they also lower blood pressure.

Chia seed is a superfood. Two tablespoons of ground chia seeds are high in essential fatty acids (EFAs), have almost 6 grams of fiber, just 64 calories and no saturated fat. Eat 2-4 tablespoons daily.

Oats: One serving of is oats is $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup, uncooked. It has four grams of fiber, half of that is soluble fiber; it has almost no saturated fat and only 150 calories. Eat one serving of oats everyday.

Soy Protein: One serving of soy protein powder has about 23mg isoflavones (fight cholesterol), 110 calories, and almost no fat.

A plant-based (vegan) diet: with 50% raw and 50% cooked vegetables and very low oil has been shown to rapidly improve cholesterol and has the potential to reverse atherosclerosis.

Read the book: *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*, by Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn.