



GENERAL HEALTH TESTING

HDL Cholesterol Information Sheet

What is HDL Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy type of fat (lipid), which travels around the body in the blood. It is an essential molecule, as it is required for building cells, producing bile for digestion, and making vitamins and hormones. Cholesterol is produced in adequate quantities in the liver, but can also be obtained from foods from animals (1).

Cholesterol carried by HDL is considered “good” cholesterol. HDL collects cholesterol from around the body, and delivers it to the liver for recycling or excretion. HDL also carries cholesterol to other organs, where it is used to produce hormones. In addition, HDL cholesterol plays a role in protecting and maintaining the inner walls of the blood vessels by repairing damaged sites (2).

What are optimal HDL cholesterol levels?

HDL cholesterol levels between 40 – 50 mg/dL for men and 50 – 59 mg/dL for women are considered optimal. Low HDL cholesterol levels (< 40 mg/dL for men and < 50 mg/dL for women) increase the risk of heart disease, independent of other risk factors, including LDL “bad” cholesterol. High levels of HDL cholesterol (≥ 60 mg/dL) offer protection from heart disease in both men and women (3).

Should I get my HDL cholesterol measured?

The Adult Treatment Panel of the National Cholesterol Education Program recommends that a fasting lipoprotein profile (including HDL cholesterol analysis) should be conducted once every five years from the age of 20 years onwards (3).

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How can I increase my HDL cholesterol?

The same changes that help lower triglycerides and LDL “bad” cholesterol are also effective for increasing HDL “good” cholesterol. Exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, and abstaining from smoking are proven ways to increase HDL cholesterol levels and improve cardiovascular health

Where can I find more info?

Visit www.genetrackdiagnostics.com for full test information, including specimen collection requirements

CONTACT US:

Email: support@genetrackdiagnostics.com

Phone: 1-888-802-0703

References:

- (1) What is Cholesterol? American Heart Association. (2020).
- (2) HDL (Good), LDL (Bad) Cholesterol and Triglycerides. American Heart Association. (2020).
- (3) Third Report of the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) Expert Panel on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Cholesterol in Adults (Adult Treatment Panel III) final report. (2002). *Circulation*. 106 (25), 3143-421.
- (4) Wing RR, et al. (2011). Benefits of modest weight loss in improving cardiovascular risk factors in overweight and obese individuals with type 2 diabetes. *Diabetes Care*. 34 (7), 1481-1486.

NOTE:

This brochure is provided for general information purposes only. It is not intended to replace medical advice from a health professional.