HDL Cholesterol

HDL cholesterol (high-density lipoprotein cholesterol) is a type of cholesterol that helps remove excess cholesterol from the bloodstream and deposit it in the liver for removal. Your HDL cholesterol level is an important indicator of your risk for developing heart disease. A high HDL cholesterol level is often referred to as “good cholesterol.”

Importance of HDL cholesterol
- High levels of HDL cholesterol (above 60 mg/dL) are associated with a lower risk of heart disease.
- Low levels of HDL cholesterol (below 40 mg/dL) are associated with an increased risk of heart disease.

Factors that affect HDL cholesterol
- Genetics: Your HDL cholesterol level is largely determined by your genes.
- Age and sex: HDL cholesterol levels tend to decrease with age and are generally lower in women than in men.
- Diet: A diet high in saturated fat and cholesterol can lower HDL cholesterol levels.
- Physical activity: Regular exercise can increase HDL cholesterol levels.
- Stress: Chronic stress can lower HDL cholesterol levels.

Ways to take action
- Exercise regularly to increase your HDL cholesterol levels.
- Eat a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein sources.
- Avoid smoking and limit alcohol intake.
- Manage stress through activities such as meditation or yoga.

About HDL cholesterol

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Keep in mind
- HDL cholesterol levels can vary depending on a variety of factors, including age, sex, and genetics.
- If your HDL cholesterol level is low, your doctor may recommend lifestyle changes or medications to help raise it.

Your HDL cholesterol level may also be affected by certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, kidney disease, and liver disease. It’s important to talk to your doctor about any concerns you have about your HDL cholesterol level.