July-September 2014

DHSS Worksite Wellness Committee

W@W

Winning @ Wellness

This Issue:

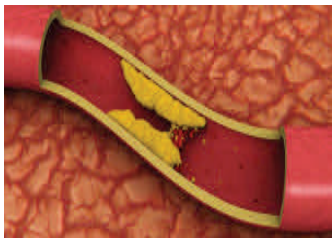
Be Healthy @ Work
Employee Buzz
Eat Smart @ Work
An Ounce of Prevention
Worksite Wellness News

Be Healthy @ Work: Cholesterol-What do you know about it?

Do you have high cholesterol? Unless you have had a blood test to find out, chances are you may not know. Having high cholesterol does not cause any symptoms, it does not cause you any pain, plus the risks from high cholesterol are not immediate. The damage accumulates over years, even decades. So having high cholesterol may not affect you in the short term, but if not managed, serious long term health risks can develop.

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that comes from two sources: the food you eat and your body. Foods from animal sources, such as meat, eggs, poultry and full-fat dairy products contain cholesterol. Your liver makes all the cholesterol you need, and then circulates it throughout your blood. Your body needs some cholesterol to function properly. The cell walls, or membranes, need it to produce hormones, vitamin D and bile acids that help you digest fat. But, your body only needs a certain amount of cholesterol, and when there is too much, health issues, such as heart disease and strokes, may occur.



Types of cholesterol

When cholesterol travels through your blood, it is attached to a protein. The protein and cholesterol combination is called a lipoprotein. There are three types of lipoproteins: high density (HDL), low density (LDL) and very low density (VLDL).

- **Low density lipoprotein,** also called "bad" cholesterol, can cause the buildup of plaque on the walls of your arteries. The more LDL in your blood, the higher the risk of heart disease.
- **High-density lipoprotein** is considered "good" cholesterol because it helps the body get rid of LDL. If your HDL level is low, your risk for heart disease increases.
- **Very low density lipoprotein** is very similar to LDL because it contains mostly fat and not a lot of protein.
- **Triglycerides** are another type of fat carried through the blood by VLDL. Excess calories, alcohol and sugar in your body are converted into triglycerides and stored in fat cells throughout your body.

What do the numbers mean?

According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), everyone over the age of 20 should have their cholesterol checked at least once every 5 years. The blood test that measures cholesterol is called a lipoprotein profile. It requires a 9-12 hour fast. The table below defines what the numbers mean.

	Desirable	Borderline High	High
Total Cholesterol	200 mg/dl	200-239 mg/dl	≥240 mg/dl
LDL	<110 mg/dL	130-159mg/dL	≥160 mg/dL ≥190mg/dL—Very high
HDL	≥60 mg/dL	N/A	N/A
Triglycerides	<150mg/dL	150-199 mg/dL	≥200 mg/dL

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What affects your cholesterol levels and what can you do about it?
Many different things can affect your cholesterol level. Some things you can control and some you cannot. Controllable factors are:

- **Diet-**a diet high in saturated fat and cholesterol can raise your blood cholesterol levels. The American Heart Association recommends limiting your average daily cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams. If you already have heart disease, you should limit your intake to less than 200 milligrams. Eating foods such as oats, beans, citrus fruits and omega 3 rich fish can help lower your levels.

- **Weight-**being overweight can increase your cholesterol level. Losing weight can help lower total, LDL and triglyceride levels and raise your HDL level.
- **Physical activity-**regular physical activity can help lower your LDL level and raise your HDL level. It can also help you lose weight. You should try to be physically active for 150 minutes a week.
- **Quit smoking-**smoking can lower your HDL level. It also injures the lining of the blood vessels and increases the risk of developing blood clots, which contributes to atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). Even inhaling others' cigarette smoke (second-hand smoke) has been shown to lower HDL cholesterol.

- **Medication-**sometimes making changes to your diet and increasing your activity levels are not enough to lower your levels. Your doctor may prescribe a cholesterol-lowering drug.

Uncontrollable factors are:

- **Age and gender-**as you age, your levels tend to rise. Before menopause, women tend to have lower levels than men. After menopause, women's LDL level tends to rise.
- **Diabetes-**poorly controlled diabetes can increase your cholesterol levels. Controlling your diabetes can help your levels to fall.

- **Heredity-**your genes partly determine how much cholesterol your body makes. High cholesterol can run in families.
- **Other factors-**certain medications and medical conditions can also increase your levels.

Knowing your cholesterol numbers, making healthy lifestyles choices and working with your physician all play a part in controlling your cholesterol.

Resources:
http://www.webmd.com/cholesterol-management/default.htm

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/AboutCholesterol/About-Cholesterol_UCM_001220_Article.jsp

http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hbc/

"If you don't do what's best for your body, you're the one who comes up on the short end."

-Julius Erving

An Ounce of Prevention:

Picnic and barbecue season has arrived!

Picnic and barbecue season offers lots of opportunities for outdoor fun with family and friends. But these warm weather events also present opportunities for foodborne bacteria to thrive. To protect yourself, your family and friends from foodborne illness during warm-weather months, safe food handling when eating outdoors is critical.

- **Keep cold food cold.** Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at 40°F or below to prevent bacterial growth.
- **Organize cooler contents**. Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable food in another.
- **Keep coolers closed**. Limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer.
- **Don't cross-contaminate**. Be sure to keep raw meat, poultry and seafood securely wrapped. If possible, keep raw meats in a separate cooler from other foods and drinks. This keeps their juices from contaminating prepared/cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw. After eating, do not put cooked foods or drinks into the cooler that was used for raw meats.
- **Clean your produce**. Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water before packing them in the cooler.

Grilling and picnicking often go hand-in-hand. There are important guidelines that should be followed to ensure that your grilled food reaches the table safely.

- **Marinate safely**. Marinate foods in the refrigerator - never on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, set aside a separate portion before adding the raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- **Cook immediately** after "partial cooking." If you partially cook food indoors to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill.
- **Cook food thoroughly**. When it's time to cook the food, have your food thermometer ready.
- **Keep hot food "ready."** Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals.
- **Don't reuse platters or utensils**. Using the same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food.
- **Check for foreign objects in food**. If you clean your grill using a bristle brush, check to make sure that no detached bristles have made their way into grilled food.

For more information on eating outdoors and handling food safely check out the FDA at: http://www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/buystoreservesafefood/ucm109899.htm

Send an e-card to friends and colleagues on safe grilling. (http://health.mo.gov/ecard/grill.htm)

A Reminder

Be cautious while hiking, camping and playing outdoors.

During the summer, many people love to spend time outdoors. While enjoying all of the recreational opportunities that Missouri has to offer, it is important to be aware of the potential for exposure to a rabid wild animal or a stray dog or cat that might have this disease. Parents should teach their children never to handle live or dead wild animals or unfamiliar dogs and cats. Animal bites are most often reported in young children, aged 5 to 9 years.

The Office of Veterinary Public Health (OVPH) has two free posters available to order to educate neighbors and communities about this potential threat. The posters increase awareness of the importance of vaccinating pets and reducing their exposure to wildlife and stray animals. For more information contact OVPH at (573) 526-4780.

"What are your favorite summer time fruits and veggies and why?"

"My favorite summertime fruit is strawberries. They taste the best in the summer, all grocery stores carry them and you can usually find them on sale. They are great with yogurt for breakfast or alone as a snack. My favorite summertime veggie is zucchini. I can't get enough of them. I eat them in salads, steamed, roasted, grilled and once in a while I stuff them with rice and ground turkey and bake them. What I can't eat right away, I shred and freeze for use in the winter when I make soup." **Amy L. Forbis**, Chief, Bureau of Reportable Disease Informatics

"I love plums in the summer time, especially the crunchy sweet ones. When I have one, I am reminded of picking plums in the summer time with my cousins and friends as child." **Alicia Jenkins**, Section for Child Care Regulation

"My favorite summertime fruit is strawberries. I love strawberry pie, yogurt with strawberries, or just plain strawberries." **Andrea Bright**, Office on Women's Health

"Watermelon is my favorite summertime fruit because it's so refreshing and the smell of watermelon always makes me think of summertime. I also love pineapple because it tastes so good when it's been sliced up and added to the grill. Cucumbers are my favorite summertime veggie because they have a clean crisp flavor; I like to add them to a pitcher of water to give the water a nice fresh taste but they are also great on salads and sandwiches." **Bobbie Coleman**, Office of Human Resources

We want to hear from you for the next Employee Buzz! ***"With all of the holiday activities coming up, what are your tips for eating healthy on the go?"*** For example, **"I always pack some easy to eat snacks such as carrots and grapes."** Email your response to worksitewellness@health.mo.gov. Please tell us if you do not want your name included with your quote.

What's your Aging IQ?

Do you think that getting older means giving up on exercise? Actually, physical activity at any age can help make your heart, lungs and muscles stronger.

Do you think that older adults are bad drivers? Not really. Older adults really tend to be safe drivers who engage in less risky behaviors behind the wheel.

Do you think older adults have nothing left to learn? As a matter of fact, there is no age limit on learning new skills or improving your existing ones.

You can test yourself, or others, on questions like these by taking the National Institute on Aging's quiz, *What's Your Aging IQ?* . This pocket-thin booklet is free. Use it to see what you know about aging. Use it to start conversations about aging. Use it to challenge aging stereotypes.

Visit the NIA website or call their information center at 1-800-222-2225 to order your free copy.

Eat Smart @ Work: Three-bean Macaroni Salad

Ingredients:
1 cup elbow macaroni, uncooked
½ lb. fresh green beans, trimmed, halved
1 can (15-½ oz.) kidney beans, rinsed
1 can (15-½ oz.) great Northern beans, rinsed
1 green pepper, chopped
¾ cup chopped red onions
½ cup mayonnaise
¼ cup Italian dressing
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill

Preparation:
1. Cook macaroni in large saucepan as directed on package, omitting salt and adding green beans to the boiling water for the last 2 minutes; drain. Rinse with cold water; drain again.
2. Place macaroni mixture in large bowl. Add remaining beans, peppers and onions; mix lightly.
3. Mix remaining ingredients until blended. Add to salad; toss to coat.

Yield:
16 - ½ cup servings.

Source: kraftrecipes.com.

Nutritional Information
Amount per Serving

Calories: 140
Fat: 6g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Sodium: 130mg
Carbohydrate: 16g
Dietary fiber: 3g
Protein: 5g
Saturated fat: 1g

Move More @ Work: Benefits of Swimming

As an alternative to heading for the gym on your lunch hour, how about heading to your local pool for a swim? Swimming seems to be the answer for a pain free, calorie burning workout. It's a great way to keep fit, stay healthy and make new friends. The resistance of the water creates the need to use your whole body, providing a great low-impact workout. Some gyms and most YMCAs have indoor pools that can be used during the lunch hour.

The health benefits of swimming include keeping the heart rate up while taking some of the impact stress felt in other types of exercise off your joints. It also builds endurance, muscle strength and cardiovascular fitness and helps maintain a healthy weight, heart and lungs. If you are looking for a workout that tones and builds muscle, alleviates arthritis joint pain and provides a total body workout, swimming may be the exercise for you. Along with the physical benefits, swimming also alleviates stress and provides a relaxing and peaceful form of exercise.

Whether swimming indoors or outdoors, remember these tips before you jump in:

- Choose a safe environment
- Warm up and stretch before you begin
- Have water available to stay hydrated
- Apply sunscreen (outdoors)
- Don't overdo it: the water provides 12 times more resistance than land exercise

Source: https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/ARC/arc_water_zone.php

DHSS Wellness Superstar

Lisa Brown works in the Section for Disease Prevention in the Division of Community and Public Health. While athletic when she was young, Lisa developed some unhealthy habits in high school and college such as eating fast food and smoking.

In law school in her early 20s she found it made her winded to go up a flight of stairs. In her first year of law school, she decided to quit cigarettes after smoking for about eight years. The most important factor was a total lifestyle change. A friend agreed to exercise with her and the physical activity helped to alleviate the stress of not smoking. She could really feel the benefits. In a few weeks she could jog a mile. That accomplishment helped her to quit smoking for good. Some of her friends thought she was crazy to try to quit smoking with two years of stressful law school left but she believed if she could do that she could do anything. Now she and her husband have two children, ages four and seven, and their house and cars are smoke free. This sets an important example. The more people you are around who smoke the more acceptable it is, and children tend to follow patterns they observe.

Lisa has always challenged herself with physical activity. She and her husband hiked up and down Pike's Peak before they had children. This was an accomplishment since she does not like heights. Her husband also exercises and most of the big adventures she has gone on were things he convinced her to do. They have gone white water rafting at the Royal Gorge in Colorado, Taos Box in New Mexico, and in Costa Rica. They went over a waterfall in Costa Rica and most people in the raft ended up in the water.

She kept up her exercise habits until having children and then got somewhat out of the habit. About a year and a half ago she wanted to get back into jogging so her husband signed her up for a 5K at the YMCA knowing since she is competitive she would take the challenge. That was her first 5K run in six years, but she has done several since. In 2013, she participated in a color run with her husband and the State Employee 5K in the fall. Their children thought it was fun to see their parents covered in color.

Jogging is her main form of exercise and she likes to get in a long run on the weekends. Her family stays active and she likes to involve them in the 5K races. She may get her daughter signed up for one that is scheduled soon. She got her niece, who is 16, to participate with her in a 5K and her niece received a medal for it!

She was not always a healthy eater. Her husband says she did not know what a salad was when he met her! Now her plans for healthy eating include concentrating on good healthy food and eliminating processed foods. It is rare for their family to eat fast food. Lisa finds it more enjoyable and healthy to eat at home with their children.

"Never continue in a job you don't enjoy. If you're happy in what you're doing, you'll like yourself, you'll have inner peace. And if you have that, along with physical health, you will have had more success than you could possibly have imagined."

Johnny Carson

Worksite Wellness News

Strive For Wellness Ambassador Update

The Strive for Wellness Program has chosen to focus on dental health and fitness this summer. The DHSS Wellness Committee will share information on these topics through emails and newsletters. To encourage employees to maximize their physical fitness, while having fun, a physical activity scavenger hunt will be promoted later this summer too. Look for information on how to participate in future wellness emails.

The Strive for Wellness Program archives past campaign materials on their website at http://www.mchcp.org/stateMembers/striveForWellness/index.asp. Find toolkits, worksheets and videos on many wellness topics including stress, weight loss, healthy eating and creating a healthy relationship with your health care provider.

The *Strive for Wellness* Health Center, located in the Truman Building in Jefferson City, opened with a bang earlier this spring. Health Center staff saw over 80 patients in its first week of operation. The health center is a pilot project to bring basic health care to employees enrolled in a MCHCP medical plan, right where they work. It offers routine care for common illnesses and basic preventive care at hours designed to fit into a hectic workday. For more information about the *Strive for Wellness* Health Center please visit http://www.mchcp.org/stateMembers/striveForWellness/FAQs_2014.asp.

Sincerely,
Pat Simmons & Michelle Jacobsen
DHSS Wellness Ambassadors

Upcoming Wellness Events

DHSS 100 Missouri Miles Challenge
Join the First Annual DHSS 100 Missouri Miles Challenge! Sign up (by division) on the Missouri 100 Miles website at: http://100missourimiles.com. At the end of each week, the division with the largest percentage of their employees signed up in their group will get bragging rights and the traveling trophy. At the end of each month, the division with the largest percentage of their employees signed up in their group will have the opportunity to wear jeans the last full week of the following month. At the end of August, the winning division will be the division with the most miles logged per capita (total miles logged divided by number of employees in the division).

Save the Date! State Employee 5K
The 2nd annual Missouri State Employee 5K Run/Walk is scheduled for Saturday, October 4th in Jefferson City! Watch for more information!

Walking Wednesdays
The **1st and 3rd Wednesdays** of every month are **Walking Wednesdays**. But don't forget that if there is a ***5th*** Wednesday in a month, that too is a Walking Wednesday! Approved t-shirts to be worn are: Worksite Wellness, Tackle the Flu and 100 Missouri Miles Challenge. **REMINDER: T-shirts are not approved to be worn on Friday Jeans Days.**