



Hello, and welcome to another edition of the Renal Diet HQ newsletter. Thanks for joining us this month. You might know that February is Heart Healthy Month, and we are making it our mission to talk about how kidney disease

and heart disease can be approached together to create a great outcome.

The article this month is an overview of how cholesterol levels work and how you can figure out if your levels are poor. Also, we have a worksheet to show to your customers so you can talk about what they need to do to improve their risk levels.

Finally, if you have not had a chance to listen to our podcast, please give us a listen. You can find us on iTunes at

www.renaldiethq.com/go/itunes

Every week, I produce an episode that provides valuable and actionable information for the kidney disease community – I would love to hear from you! Thanks for taking the time to read this, and we hope you have a great week. Again, let us know if we can assist you with your renal diet needs.

Mathea Ford, RDN, LD

Our website: www.renaldiethq.com

Cholesterol Guidelines

Watching your cholesterol is perhaps one of the most important factors in protecting yourself against cardiovascular disease. Getting your cholesterol levels checked regularly and following an appropriate diet and medication schedule is a crucial step for a healthy lifestyle.

Typically, it is recommended that all adults have their cholesterol levels checked once every five years at the minimum. Especially if you have risk factors such as a family history of cardiovascular problems, your doctor might recommend that you have your cholesterol levels checked more often. In some situations it might be recommended that you have your cholesterol levels checked once per year.

Not only should you get your cholesterol levels checked regularly, but it is important to understand what cholesterol is and what the levels mean.

What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol refers to a fat-like substance that resides in all cells in your body. Your body needs cholesterol to help your body digest food, make hormones, and perform other vital body functions. The body typically makes enough cholesterol on its own, but cholesterol can also be added by the foods you eat.

Cholesterol can be too high or too low. High blood cholesterol can put you at risk for heart disease.

High cholesterol occurs because the body cannot absorb cholesterol, so it builds up in your system.

Problems with cholesterol can be inherited through genetics or be caused by age and even gender. Those are risk factors that unfortunately cannot be controlled. However, risk factors such as the foods you eat, physical activity, and weight can all potentially be regulated and controlled for healthier cholesterol.

Cholesterol travels through your body on lipoproteins. These lipoproteins are either high-density or low-density. Both types are essential for normal bodily and cardiovascular function, but it is possible to have too little or too much of either. These lipoproteins determine if cholesterol is good or bad.

Types of Cholesterol: The Good and the Bad

Cholesterol comes in two parts, generally referred to as “good” cholesterol and “bad” cholesterol.

Bad Cholesterol

Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL) Cholesterol is referred to as “bad” cholesterol. If your blood contains too much low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, you can be at risk for coronary heart disease. This is because the buildup of cholesterol can cause plaque to build up inside your arteries and restrict blood flow to the heart.

Good Cholesterol

High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL) Cholesterol is good. These lipoproteins protect against heart disease by facilitating the movement of bad cholesterol to the liver to be flushed away and slowing plaque buildup.

Cholesterol Levels

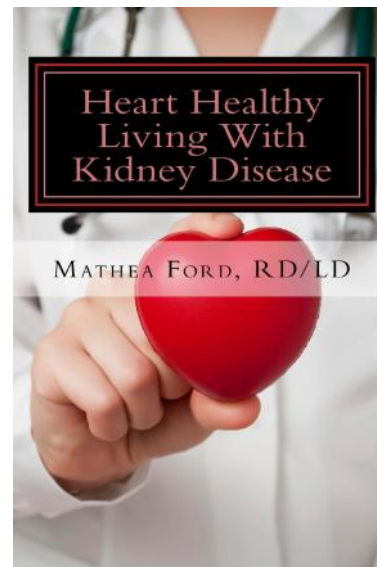
Like any body measurement, cholesterol has guidelines that your readings should fall between. When you get your cholesterol checked, your LDL and

HDL cholesterol measurements will be shown separately. Your overall cholesterol reading, or total cholesterol, is the two measurements added together.

A desirable total cholesterol reading is less than 200mg/dL. Anything above 240mg/dL is considered high.

The total cholesterol reading is most important, however you should pay attention to your separate LDL and HDL readings as well. Typically, you will want your LDL readings to show as 100mg/dL or below, and your HDL to be 60mg/dL and above.

As a person with chronic kidney disease, it's important to make sure you are taking care of your heart health as much as you work on your kidney health. When your cholesterol is elevated, it can clog your arteries, and that will affect even the small blood vessels in your kidneys. Learning about what cholesterol is and how it can be improved is the first step toward controlling your levels.



Find our book at

<http://www.renaldiethq.com/go/HeartHealthy>

Cholesterol Guidelines Worksheet

Determine if you have risk factors for high cholesterol by answering the following questions:

Do you have a family history of heart disease?

Do you have a BMI (body mass index) of over 25?
(see chart below to calculate BMI)

Are you a male over the age of 45 or a female over the age of 55?

Do you often eat fast food or foods high in trans fats?

Do you live a very sedentary lifestyle, meaning you do not engage in physical activity on a very regular basis?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, speak with your doctor to set up blood work to check your cholesterol.

To calculate your BMI:

Your height in inches squared

(multiplied by itself) = **A**

Your weight in pounds = **B**

(B divided by A) x 703 = BMI

18.5-24.9 Considered Normal Weight

25.0-29.9 Considered Overweight

30.0- greater Considered Obese

Provided by: www.renaldiethq.com

Once you receive your blood cholesterol readings, here are the guidelines:

LDL Cholesterol (Bad)

70mg/dL or below = Good

130mg/dL-159mg/dL = Borderline

160mg/dL or above = High

HDL Cholesterol (Good)

Below 40mg/dL = Low- varies by gender

40mg/dL-60mg/dL = Mostly good

60mg/dL and above = Great

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