

# DYSLIPIDEMIA

Dr. Abhay Nigam, M.B.B.S., M.D.(Medicine),  
Specialist "A" (Internal Medicine), Visiting Physician  
R.A.K. Hospital, Ras Al Khaimah, U.A.E.

www.abhaynigam.com

## INTRODUCTION

Let's start with some basics. Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that circulates in your blood. Some of it is made naturally by your body, and the rest comes from foods you eat. There are two main types: HDL and LDL.

**LDL** is "bad cholesterol." It can clog your arteries, increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke. *Healthy number:* Less than 100mg/dL. (For patients after Myocardial Infarctions or Diabetics: Below 70 mg%)

**HDL** is "good cholesterol." What's good about it? HDL attaches to bad cholesterol and escorts it to the liver, which filters it out of the body. So HDL reduces the amount of bad cholesterol in your system. *Healthy number:* more than 40 mg/dl for males and 50 mg/dl for females. (Higher is better)

**Total cholesterol** is the sum of all types of cholesterol in your blood. Although some doctors may still refer to this number, it's less significant than your HDL and LDL levels. *Healthy number:* Less than 200 mg/dL.

**Triglycerides**, while not cholesterol, are another type of fat floating in your blood. Just as with bad cholesterol, having a high level of triglycerides increases your risk of cardiovascular problems. *Healthy number:* Less than 150 mg/dL.

Make sure that your lipid profile blood sample is collected after 12 hours fasting (Meanwhile, you are allowed to drink only water) and all lipid parameters e.g. Total cholesterol, Triglycerides, HDL Cholesterol and LDL Cholesterol are tested.

## MANAGEMENT

- A. If you are smoker – **MUST STOP SMOKING** – otherwise all the benefits of lipid reduction and exercise will be lost if you continue to smoke.
- B. **REGULAR EXERCISE:** Minimum is 30 minutes brisk walk or jogging daily at least 5 days a week. If having a sedentary life style then an ECG and consultation with a Physician prior to embarking on exercise program is recommended.  
Exercise can also be started in form of some outdoor sporting activity like Tennis, Football, Badminton, Volleyball or swimming or indoor on a Treadmill equipment or exercise bicycle etc.
- C. **EAT AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE:** High fibre diet helps to reduce Cholesterol: most green leafy vegetables, most fruits, fish (esp Mackerel, Salmon & Tuna)
- D. **ENSURE REGULAR INTAKE OF:** Garlic, Soyabean (as Kheema, milk or Tofu or various other forms), Bran and Psyllium are known to reduce cholesterol. Daily intake of 20-30 gms of nuts (Almonds and Walnuts) is also beneficial.
- E. **WHOLEMEAL CEREALS** are good for breakfast. Oats and Bulgur are good source of whole grain cereals. Must use low fat milk & curd.
- F. **CHECK YOUR COOKING OIL** – Hydrogenated vegetable oils are not good. – Best is **Canola oil** (Brand name "Heartlite & Amber) Corn oil & Sunflower oil are not bad. Regular use of Olive oil in salads is beneficial. Avoid re-using the heated oil.
- G. **AVOID** – Mutton, Fried food, potatoes, white rice, white flour, sweets, chocolates, pastries, saturated fats like butter, hydrogenated oils, coconut oil etc. (wholemeal bread should be preferred over white bread) not more than 3 egg yolk (yellow part of egg) per week. Prefer skinless poultry.
- H. Those taking statin group of drugs (Atorvastatin, Rosuvastatin or Simvastatin etc) should ensure
  - a) They take their medication at bedtime in recommended dosage
  - b) Avoid taking Grapefruit or Grapefruit juice
  - c) Check their Lipid profile every 8-12 weeks. (or as advised by Physician)
  - d) Take their medications regularly and do not stop or change dosage unless advised by your doctor.