



## Treating High Cholesterol with Naturopathic Treatments

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### Diet Changes:

- Avoid coffee, alcohol, and high fat meats (Beef, Pork, Lamb – avoid the high fat cuts if you continue to eat these meats)
- Reduce or avoid foods with high fat content: potato chips, snack foods, nuts
- Choose low-fat versions of dairy products: skim (or 1%) milk, yogurt (low fat), soft cheeses (e.g. mozzarella)
- Increase vegetable consumption: 3 to 5 servings per day. Onions and garlic (raw preferred over cooked) are known for lowering cholesterol and improving the integrity of the cardiovascular system.
- Increase fruit intake: 3 to 5 servings per day
- Increase fiber intake: eat oatmeal for breakfast or add oatbran to a cereal or smoothie in the morning (1 Tbsp per day)
- Increase consumption of lentils and legumes: this adds to dietary fiber and is an excellent source of low-fat protein. Hummus or low-fat nut-butters are great snacks. Soy foods (tofu, soy cheese/milk) is highly recommended in a cholesterol-lowering diet.
- For detailed diet ideas, the following books should be consulted: Dr. Dean Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease, or Eating Alive II by Jonn Matsen, ND

### Exercise:

- Aerobic exercises are probably the best approach to lowering cholesterol. Walking, cycling or swimming are good examples of aerobic exercise.
- Your goal should be to exercise at least 4 days per week for cardiovascular benefit, 6 days per week if desiring weight loss.
- Measure your pulse rate (if possible) before, during (midway), and after exercise. The pulse can be found near your wrist (thumb side, called radial pulse) or on the neck (carotid). Count the number of pulses in 15 seconds, then multiply by four (4) to give the number of pulses per minute.
- If you choose walking as your exercise, you should gradually work up to 45 to 60 minutes per session (or per day: exercise has a cumulative effect). Your pulse should reach 60-70 per cent of Maximum Heart Rate (calculated by subtracting your age from 220, then calculate the percentage). For example, a 50 year old person would target their pulse rate to 102 to 119 beats per minute to maintain within the 60 to 70% range.



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### Herbal medicines:

- Red Yeast Rice Extract – excellent results in clinical studies
- Guggulipid – an extract from the Myrrh plant (*Commiphora mukul*)
- Garlic – high allicin content supplements provide the best therapeutic effect (e.g. Garlitrin 4000, Kyolic)
- Policosinol – produced and studied initially in Cuba with excellent results. Therapeutic dose ranges from 10 to 20 mg per day, taken in the evenings (similar dosing schedule as recommended for prescription products such as Lipitor)
- Phytosterols – originally researched for immune dysfunction (allergies, autoimmune conditions), it has also shown cholesterol lowering effects.

Many commercial supplements include a blend of several of these herbs. Best results are with products based around Red Yeast Rice extract.

Patients should regularly (every 3-4 months) take herbal medicines that improve liver and gall bladder function. The intent is to increase metabolism of fats by the liver, and increase the excretion of cholesterol from the liver and gall bladder. Ideal herbal medicines include: Milk Thistle, Artichoke, Beets, Tumeric. SAT by Thorne Research is an ideal product, but others may be equally effective.

### Homeopathy:

This system of therapy, based on the principle of “like curing like” points to using *Cholesterolinum* as a treatment for difficult cases of elevated cholesterol. Use Pascoe *Cholesterinum Similiaplex*.



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### Nutritional Supplements:

- B vitamins contribute greatly to cholesterol metabolism, with vitamin B3 (niacin) being a long-time standard in research. High doses of B12, folic acid and active B6 (pyridoxal-5-phosphate) also reduces homocysteine (a metabolite of cholesterol, and possibly more harmful to cardiovascular tissues than cholesterol). Use a B100 or high B supplement like OrtiB (Genestra) in your overall supplement protocol.
- If you take niacin, start from 100 mg doses and work up to 500 mg. You may experience an itching sensation of the skin that is caused by niacin. This effect is short-term in most people provided that you gradually increase the dose to 500 mg, which can then be taken 2-3 times per day. Only use niacin under a doctor's supervision. Liver function should be tested before starting niacin use, and monitored regularly during its use.
- Pantethine (a form of vitamin B5) taken at 900 mg/day (in divided doses) aids cholesterol management.
- Magnesium (citrate) at 400 mg/day can raise low HDL levels (Curr Ther Res 1948; 36:341-346).

### Other ideas:

**Reduce and manage stress:** high cortisol levels (a hormone secreted from the adrenal glands in response to stress) is associated with elevated cholesterol and Insulin Resistance Syndrome.