



# Mission Possible

## WHAT DO YOUR CHOLESTEROL NUMBERS MEAN?

High blood cholesterol signals a higher risk of heart attack and stroke. That's why it's important to have your cholesterol levels checked regularly and discuss them with your doctor. A "lipoprotein profile" is a test to find out your blood cholesterol numbers. It gives information about total cholesterol, LDL (bad) cholesterol and HDL (good) cholesterol, as well as triglycerides (blood fats).

### What should my total cholesterol level be?

**Total Blood Cholesterol Levels:**  
(milligrams per deciliter of blood = mg/dL)

Less than 200 mg/dL = Desirable (lower risk)  
200 – 239 mg/dL = Borderline High (higher risk)  
240 mg/dL and above = High Risk (more than twice the risk as desirable level)

### What should my HDL cholesterol level be?

HDL stands for high density lipoprotein. HDL is "good" cholesterol because it seems to lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. That means that – unlike other cholesterol levels – the higher your HDL, the better. You can raise your HDL by quitting smoking, losing excess weight and being more active.

**HDL Cholesterol levels:**  
(milligrams per deciliter of blood = mg/dL)

Less than 40 mg/dL = Low HDL (higher risk)  
40 to 59 mg/dL = The higher, the better  
60 mg/dL and above = High HDL (lower risk)

### What should my LDL cholesterol level be?

LDL stands for low density lipoprotein. This is the main carrier of harmful cholesterol in your blood. A high level of LDL means there's a higher risk of heart disease and stroke.

**LDL Cholesterol Levels**  
(milligrams per deciliter of blood = mg/dL)

Less than 100 mg/dL = Optimal for people with heart disease or diabetes  
100 to 129 mg/dL = Near or above optimal  
130 to 159 mg/dL = Borderline high  
160 mg/dL to 189 mg/dL = High  
190 mg/dL and above = Very High

## What should my triglyceride level be?

Triglycerides are the most common type of fat in your body. They're also a major energy source. They come from food, and your body also makes them. As people get older, gain excess weight or both, their triglyceride and cholesterol levels tend to rise. Many people who have heart disease or diabetes have high fasting triglyceride levels. Some studies have shown that people with above-normal fasting triglyceride levels (150 mg/dL or higher) have a higher risk of heart disease and stroke.

### Triglyceride levels:

(milligrams per deciliter of blood = mg/dL)

Less than 150 mg/dL = Normal

150 to 199 mg/dL = Borderline High

200 – 499 mg/dL = High

500 mg/dL and above = Very High

## My Cholesterol and Triglyceride Levels

Use the chart below to keep track of your cholesterol and triglyceride levels each time you have a test. Make sure you discuss these numbers with your doctor.

|                               | My Goal | 1 <sup>st</sup> Visit | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Visit | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Visit |
|-------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Total blood cholesterol level | _____   | _____                 | _____                 | _____                 |
| HDL cholesterol level         | _____   | _____                 | _____                 | _____                 |
| LDL cholesterol level         | _____   | _____                 | _____                 | _____                 |
| Triglyceride level            | _____   | _____                 | _____                 | _____                 |

## How can I learn more?

1. Sign up for **APPLEGRAM**, Blanchard Valley Regional Health Association's new e-health newsletter. Go to [www.bvha.org](http://www.bvha.org), click **APPLEGRAM**.
2. This information was taken from The National Institutes of Health, [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov) and the American Heart Association, [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org), websites. Please visit their websites for additional information.
3. For information on stroke, visit [www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org).

## What are the Warning Signs of Heart Attack and Stroke?

### Warning Signs of Heart Attack:

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly with mild pain or discomfort with one or more of these symptoms:

- **Chest discomfort**
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body**
- **Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort**
- **Other signs including breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness**

### Warning Signs of Stroke:

- **Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body**
- **Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding**
- **Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes**
- **Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination**
- **Sudden, severe headache with no known cause**

**Call 911.....get to a hospital immediately if you experience signs of a heart attack or stroke!**

Source: National Institutes of Health and American Heart Association