



# CARE INSTRUCTIONS

KAISER PERMANENTE

## High Cholesterol in Teens: Care Instructions

### Your Kaiser Permanente Care Instructions

Cholesterol is a type of fat in your blood. It is needed for many body functions, such as making new cells. Cholesterol is made by your body. It also comes from food you eat. High cholesterol means you have too much of the fat in your blood.

If you have high cholesterol, this fat can build up inside your blood vessel walls. Over time, this raises your risk of having heart disease, a heart attack, or a stroke.

You can improve your cholesterol levels and lower your risk of heart disease with healthy habits. But for some people, cholesterol problems run in the family. If changes in diet and exercise don't improve your cholesterol levels, you and your doctor can decide if medicine is right for you.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

### How can you care for yourself at home?

- Eat a variety of foods every day. Good choices include fruits, vegetables, whole grains (like oatmeal), dried beans and peas, and nuts and seeds. Other good choices are soy products (like tofu) and fat-free or low-fat dairy products.
- Use olive and canola oils instead of butter, margarine, or hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils. (Canola oil margarine without trans fat is fine.)
- Replace red meat with fish, poultry, and soy protein (like tofu).
- Limit processed and packaged foods like chips, crackers, and cookies.
- Bake, broil, or steam foods instead of frying them.

## High Cholesterol in Teens: Care Instructions (Page 2 of 2)

- Limit foods high in cholesterol, such as egg yolks.
- Be physically active. Get plenty of exercise every day. Go for a walk or jog, ride your bike, or play sports with friends.
- Stay at a healthy weight or lose weight by making the changes in eating and physical activity listed above. Losing just a small amount of weight, even 5 to 10 pounds, can reduce your risk for having a heart attack or stroke.
- Do not smoke. Smoking can increase the chance you will have a heart attack. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines. These can increase your chances of quitting for good.
- If you take medicine for high cholesterol, be sure to take it every day.

## When should you call for help?

**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

- You take cholesterol medicine and think you have side effects. These may include fatigue, upset stomach, gas, constipation, and pain or cramps in the belly. Report any muscle pain right away.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You want help in making diet and exercise changes.
- You are worried about your cholesterol level.
- You have family members with very high cholesterol levels.

## Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://www.kp.org>

Enter **C030** in the search box to learn more about "**High Cholesterol in Teens: Care Instructions.**"

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