



## INFORMATION PRESCRIPTION

### Diabetes and your cholesterol

Your last cholesterol reading: **Total:**

**HDL:**

**LDL:**

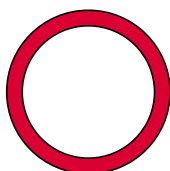
People with diabetes and high levels of bad cholesterol are at increased risk of a heart attack or stroke. By lowering your bad cholesterol, you can significantly reduce your risk.

#### What is cholesterol?

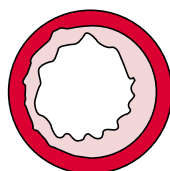
Cholesterol is a type of fat in the blood and is essential for the body to function. There is good cholesterol and bad cholesterol. HDL (high-density lipoprotein) is 'good' cholesterol which helps protect you from heart disease. LDL (low-density lipoprotein) is 'bad' cholesterol and increases your risk of heart disease.

#### When is cholesterol a problem?

Too much bad LDL cholesterol in the blood causes fatty material to build up in the blood vessels supplying the brain and heart. This narrows the blood vessels and can lead to a blockage, which can cause a heart attack or stroke.



Normal blood vessel



Blood vessel clogged up with fatty material

#### How can I lower my bad cholesterol?

You can make changes that lower your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. These include eating a healthy balanced diet, being active and not smoking.

Most people need a medication to lower their bad cholesterol – the most common type is called a statin. Statins have been proven to lower cholesterol. **Most people do not experience side effects.** If you do, it is important to speak to your doctor so they can find a medication that suits you.

#### Eat a healthy balanced diet

Include high-fibre carb foods like whole grains, lentils and legumes.

Choose lean proteins like skinless poultry, fish, lean meat, tofu or legumes.

Eat a variety of different coloured vegetables and fruit. Aim for at least five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit every day.

Replace butter, lard and ghee with small amounts of healthy oils and spreads like canola, olive, peanut, soybean or avocado.

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Limit foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugar, processed meats, fried foods, biscuits, pastries, cakes and sweetened drinks.

Use the healthy plate model to help with portion sizes. This means filling 1/2 your plate with non-starchy vegetables or salad, 1/4 with lean protein, and 1/4 with nutritious, high-fibre carbs.

### Be active

Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity at least five days a week. Physical activity should raise your heartbeat, such as brisk walking, cycling, or swimming. Also include muscle-strengthening activities twice a week, such as lifting weights, yoga, and gardening.

### Stop smoking

For help quitting, ask about your local quit smoking service or call the Quitline on **13 7848**.

### My next steps

Discuss with your diabetes health professional two actions you are going to focus on (think about what, where, when and how):

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Health professional: \_\_\_\_\_

Review date: \_\_\_\_\_

### The NDSS and you

Whether you have just been diagnosed with diabetes, or have been living with diabetes for a while, the NDSS provides a range of support services, information, and subsidised products to help you manage your diabetes, stay healthy and live well. For access to more resources (including translated versions), or to find out more about support services, go to **ndss.com.au** or call the NDSS Helpline on **1800 637 700**.

This information is intended as a guide only. It should not replace individual medical advice and if you have any concerns about your health or further questions, you should contact your health professional.