

Cholesterol and Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

How does high cholesterol affect my arteries?

Having too much cholesterol in your blood can cause your arteries to become narrowed with plaque. Over time, the flow of blood through the arteries is slowed or blocked. This can happen to all of the arteries in your body including to your legs (peripheral artery disease) and heart (coronary heart disease).

How will controlling my blood cholesterol help me?

Keeping blood cholesterol levels under control can help PAD and lower your chances of having a heart attack and stroke

What should my cholesterol levels be?

People with PAD need to keep their LDL or “bad” cholesterol less than 2.6 millimoles/litre.

If you have PAD and at least one of these risk factors:

- diabetes
- smoking
- low HDL (good cholesterol)
- family history of heart disease

then, you need to keep your LDL cholesterol below 1.8 mmol/litre.

Your nurse or doctor will discuss your LDL level target with you.

How do I lower my LDL cholesterol?

Both lifestyle changes and medications can help lower LDL cholesterol levels.

Diet

Ask for a copy of “Healthy Eating and PAD” to learn more about what foods are right for you.

Medications

There are many types of medications to help control your blood cholesterol.

The main types are called:

- statins
- fibrates
- resins
- niacin

Many people take more than one medication for their cholesterol. Your doctor will work with you to find the one(s) that are right for you.

Tips for taking your cholesterol medication?

- Take your medication as told to you by your doctor even if your cholesterol returns to normal.
- Do not stop taking your medication without talking to your doctor.
- If you are feeling unwell after starting your medication, talk to your doctor right away. You should not feel differently after taking the medication.

Talk to your doctor about your cholesterol levels.

In the hospital my cholesterol levels were:

LDL _____

HDL _____

Triglycerides _____

My cholesterol medications are: _____

Nurse's notes:

Questions for my family doctor:

Helpful websites:

Peripheral Arterial Disease Coalition www.padcoalition.org

Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada www.heartandstroke.ca

Canadian College of Family Physicians www.cfpc.ca