

How to Increase HDL (Good Cholesterol)

Eat Whole Grain foods like oatmeal, barley and brown rice instead of white breads, pastas and potatoes. Feed your sweet tooth with fresh fruits. Instead of sweetened beverages (pop, fruit juice) Substitute sugar-free substitutes, such as iced tea, seltzer water, or fresh fruit in water. Unbuttered popcorn or unsalted nuts. and fruits and celery with peanut butter on it make great snacks,

Rule of 5: If a snack or cereal has more than 5 gms of sugar and more sugar than fiber in a serving - consider finding a different snack or cereal. Oatmeal which has 4 gms of fiber and no sugar is still a good choice as is fruit.

Whenever possible, use olive oil, as your oil of choice for cooking and salad dressings. Canola oil is a good choice if you have to heat something to a high temperature. The fats found in peanut butter can increase HDL cholesterol levels without increasing your total cholesterol.

Eliminate Trans Fats: Trans fatty acids are currently present in many of your favorite prepared foods -- anything in which the nutrition label reads "partially hydrogenated vegetable oils" -- so eliminating them from the diet is not a simple task. But trans fatty acids not only increase LDL cholesterol levels, they also reduce HDL cholesterol levels. Removing them from your diet will almost certainly result in a measurable increase in HDL levels.

Fish! The intake of several fish meals each week has been observed to increase HDL cholesterol, even over a short amount of time. Choose the fatty fish, such as salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel, and sea bass. Fish oil in supplemental form has also been shown to increase HDL cholesterol over a longer period of time. Other omega-3 fatty acids such as flaxseed (ground, of course), green leafy vegetables, and walnuts are all good sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

Weight loss in overweight individuals will often decrease LDL and increase HDL cholesterol.

Very low fat diets will lower HDL as well as LDL cholesterol.

It is best to include some beneficial fats such as those found in fish, nuts, flax, avocados, and legumes (such as soy, kidney beans, chickpeas).

Make sure you have enough Lean protein in your diet:

2T hummus 1oz unsalted nuts (22 almonds or 10 walnuts) 2T all natural peanut or almond butter. Be careful because the nut spreads can lend a lot of calories in fat. (avoid those with added sugar) ½ c legumes (chickpeas, kidney, cannelloni, etc) 8oz 1% low fat milk, 1oz low fat cheeses (less than 5 grams of fat per ounce) 1% cottage cheese, One container of low fat yogurt, One egg, 1-2 oz of sliced deli meats like turkey, chicken, ham, and lean roast beef

Increase physical activity to >30 minutes day

Stop smoking

Sometimes, a temporary drop in HDL occurs when major changes have been made in the diet and total cholesterol has been lowered significantly. For most people, HDL levels will rise again if the diet changes are maintained. Try the suggestions listed above and see your HDL rise over the next few months. Reach for your health potential