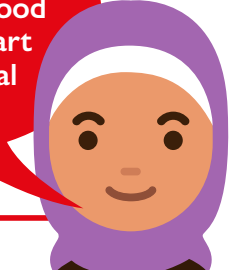


# CHOLESTEROL

## Know Your Heart RISK

# RISK

RAISED CHOLESTEROL IS A SILENT KILLER



Cholesterol is one of the leading causes of diseases of the heart and blood vessels, along with high blood pressure, which can cause a heart attack or stroke and peripheral arterial disease.

### What is a 'Normal' Cholesterol Level?

If you're at risk of a heart attack or stroke - **the lower the better.**



### Who's at RISK?

- If you've already had a heart attack or stroke (known as events).
- If you have family history of early heart disease or stroke (below age 60).
- If you have vascular dementia.
- If you have peripheral arterial disease (PAD).
- If you have other risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic kidney disease (CKD), being overweight, or you smoke.



### High Cholesterol can be Inherited

If you have early heart disease (below age 60) in your family, you may have a genetic condition called familial hypercholesterolaemia (FH). This raises your cholesterol significantly even if you have a healthy lifestyle.



### It Doesn't Happen Overnight

Heart attacks and strokes happen after years or decades - as cholesterol can start building up in your arteries from your teens. The longer your cholesterol is raised, the greater the risk.

### Keep it Low for Life

**EARLY ACTION** = lower risk of early problems such as an event, dementia and PAD.

**KEEPING IT LOW** = long term commitment to a healthy diet, lifestyle and appropriate medicine(s) ensures that you reduce your risk of an event.



## How can you Lower Your RISK?

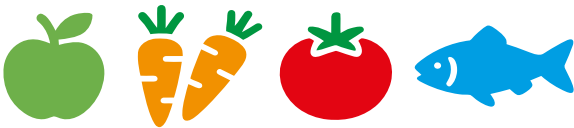


### Get a Cholesterol Test

Ask a healthcare professional (this might be a doctor, nurse or pharmacist) for a cholesterol test to find out if you have raised cholesterol.

### With Diet and Lifestyle

Learn the foundations of a heart-healthy diet.



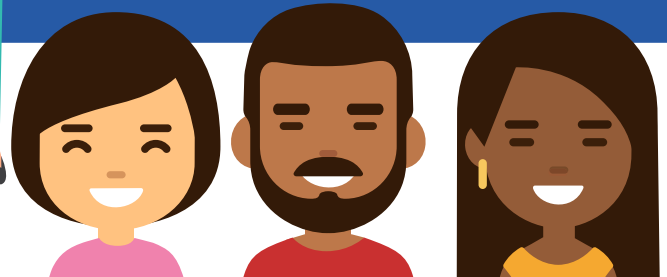
### Make a Shared Decision with Your Healthcare Professional

- Discuss your options, raise concerns, and choose what's right for you.
- Discuss any barriers to taking your medicines with your healthcare professionals e.g. concerns, side effects etc.



### With Medicines

- **Statins:** These are the first-line treatment and most people take them with no issues. There is more than one type of statin, if one doesn't work for you, you can change to another.
- Other options include **Ezetimibe, Bempedoic Acid, Inclisiran** and **PCSK9 Inhibitors**. Like many other conditions, raised cholesterol often requires more than one medicine to get to the individualised treatment target. This is known as combination therapy.
- Most people will need to take these medicines for life, but you will have regular reviews to see if adjustments could help.



Scan the QR codes for more info



Find out more about cholesterol in this animation



Get an NHS Health Check



How healthy is your diet?



Cholesterol Smart Home - HEART UK



Understand your cholesterol test results



Understand what treatment options there are and how they work

For more information about cholesterol visit [www.heartuk.org.uk](http://www.heartuk.org.uk)

# RISK

RAISED CHOLESTEROL IS A SILENT KILLER

HEART UK - actively supported by gifts in wills & donations



[www.heartuk.org.uk](http://www.heartuk.org.uk)



Charity Registration No: 1003904  
©HEART UK February 2026.

