

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Cholesterol: Know Your Numbers

**Eau Claire, WI, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019** – Heart disease accounts for 1 in 4 deaths across the country, and high cholesterol is one of the largest risk factors for heart disease. While the body can make all the cholesterol that it needs, cholesterol is found in many animal products. Eating fats can also change cholesterol levels. High cholesterol levels can lead to blocked arteries, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

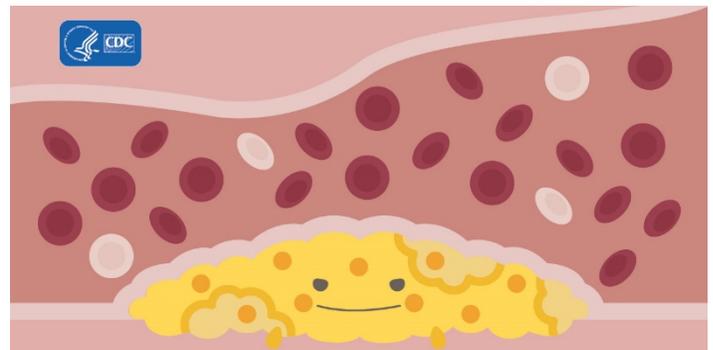
The first step in managing cholesterol? **Getting tested.** “High cholesterol does not usually show any symptoms or warning signs,” says Ellen Jacobs, public health nurse. “This is why it is important for adults to have their blood tested at least once every five years by a healthcare provider.” **Almost one third of Eau Claire Residents have been told by their provider that their blood cholesterol is high.**

**Adults should schedule a blood test with their doctor if they have not had their blood tested in the last five years.** Adults should also have their blood tested if they have:

- High blood pressure
- A body mass index greater than 30 (obese)
- Diabetes
- A family history of heart disease
- A history of smoking

Once individuals have their cholesterol tested, it’s important to know these numbers and what is considered “good.” This test measures four important numbers:

- Total cholesterol (should be less than 170 mg/dL)
- Low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or “bad cholesterol,” should be less than 110 mg/dL)
- High-density lipoprotein (HDL, or “good cholesterol,” should be 35 mg/dL or higher)
- Triglycerides (“fats,” should be less than 150 mg/dL)



There are many ways to lower or manage cholesterol levels. Doctors may prescribe medications to treat high cholesterol. However, there are many options to manage cholesterol before relying on medication:

- Eating low-fat, high-fiber foods (fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and whole grains)
- Being physically active each week
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Not smoking or quitting smoking

September is National Cholesterol Education Month. For more information about the dangers of high cholesterol and managing cholesterol, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/index.htm>.

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