

# CHOLESTEROL LOWERING FOODS

## Oats



An easy first step to improving your cholesterol is having a bowl of oatmeal or cold oat-based cereal like Cheerios for breakfast. It gives you 1 to 2 grams of soluble fiber. Add a banana or some strawberries for another half-gram. Current nutrition guidelines recommend getting 20 to 35 grams of fiber a day, with at least 5 to 10 grams coming from soluble fiber.

Barley and other whole grains. Like oats and oat bran, barley and other whole grains can help lower the risk of heart disease, mainly via the soluble fiber they deliver.

## Beans



Beans are especially rich in soluble fiber. They also take awhile for the body to digest, meaning you feel full for longer after a meal. That's one reason beans are a useful food for folks trying to lose weight. With so many choices — from navy and kidney beans to lentils, garbanzos, black-eyed peas, and beyond — and so many ways to prepare them, beans are a very versatile food.

## Nuts



Studies show that eating almonds, walnuts, peanuts, and other nuts is good for the heart. Eating 2 ounces of nuts a day can slightly lower LDL, on the order of 5%.

## Vegetable oils



Using liquid vegetable oils such as canola, sunflower, safflower, and others in place of butter, lard, or shortening when cooking or at the table helps lower LDL.

## Some fruits



Apples, pears, strawberries, citrus fruits. These fruits are rich in pectin, a type of soluble fiber that lowers LDL.

## Fish



Eating fish two or three times a week can lower LDL in two ways:

- by replacing meat, which has LDL-boosting saturated fats
- by delivering LDL-lowering omega-3 fats.

Omega-3s reduce triglycerides in the bloodstream and also protect the heart by helping prevent the onset of abnormal heart rhythms. The highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids are in:

|            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| Mackerel   | Albacore tuna |
| Lake trout | Salmon        |
| Herring    | Halibut       |
| Sardines   |               |

## Fiber supplements



Supplements offer the least appealing way to get soluble fiber. Two teaspoons a day of psyllium, which is found in Metamucil and other bulk-forming laxatives, provide about 4 grams of soluble fiber.