



American Heart Association®
Life's Essential 8™



Our bodies make cholesterol naturally, and we can also get it from some of the foods we eat. Cholesterol is a type of fat that travels through our blood to different parts of our body. It helps build our cells and makes some important hormones. It is found in foods that come from animals.

Imagine cholesterol as little helpers in our bodies. They are like tiny workers that help build and repair our cells, which are like the building blocks of our bodies. But just like with toys or treats, too much cholesterol can be a problem. It's like having too many workers in one place and things start to build up and get messy.

There are two types of cholesterol:
HDL (high-density lipoprotein) and LDL (low-density lipoprotein).

- HDL cholesterol is the "good" cholesterol because it helps remove the extra cholesterol we don't need from our blood.
- LDL cholesterol is like the "bad" cholesterol because too much of it can build up in our blood vessels and make it harder for our hearts

