Hyperlipidemia — High Cholesteral

Cholesterol is a waxy substance found in your blood. Your body needs cholesterol to build healthy cells, but high levels of cholesterol can increase your risk of heart disease.

With high cholesterol, you can develop fatty deposits in your blood vessels. Eventually, these deposits grow, making it difficult for enough blood to flow through your arteries. Sometimes, those deposits can break suddenly and form a clot that causes a heart attack or stroke.
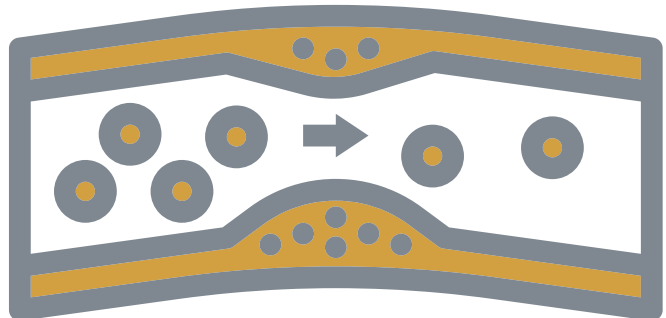
Symptoms

High cholesterol has no symptoms. A blood test is the only way to detect if you have it.

Risk Factors

Factors that can increase your risk of bad cholesterol include:

- Poor Diet
- Obesity
- Lack of Exercise
- Smoking
- Age
- Diabetes

Complications

If you have too many cholesterol particles in your blood, cholesterol may accumulate on your artery walls. Eventually, deposits called plaques may form. The deposits may narrow — or block — your arteries. These plaques can also burst, causing a blood clot.

High cholesterol can cause a dangerous accumulation of cholesterol and other deposits on the walls of your arteries (atherosclerosis). These deposits (plaques) can reduce blood flow through your arteries, which can cause complications, such as:

- **Chest pain.** If the arteries that supply your heart with blood (coronary arteries) are affected, you might have chest pain (angina) and other symptoms of coronary artery disease.
- **Heart attack.** If plaques tear or rupture, a blood clot can form at the plaque-rupture site — blocking the flow of blood or breaking free and plugging an artery downstream. If blood flow to part of your heart stops, you'll have a heart attack.
- **Stroke.** Similar to a heart attack, a stroke occurs when a blood clot blocks blood flow to part of your brain.