

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TC, Total Cholesterol, is a measure of both of “good” and “bad” cholesterol in your blood at a given time. It is usually measured in milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL). This test does not require you to fast (go without food or drink). A TC of less than 200 mg/dL is desirable.

HDL, High Density Lipoproteins, is the so-called “good” cholesterol because it helps to clear excess lipids from the arteries. The higher this number is, the better. An HDL of 60 mg/dL or more is beneficial; an HDL of below 40mg/dL is considered a risk factor for heart disease. An HDL test does not require you to fast. HDL should be measured whenever your cardiac risk is being assessed.

TC/HDL Ratio, is a comparison of total cholesterol to your HDL cholesterol. A ratio of 4.5 or less is desirable. The lower the ratio, the less risk you have of developing heart disease.

LDL, Low Density Lipoprotein, is the “bad” cholesterol because it contributes to the buildup of fat deposits in arterial walls (arteriosclerosis). An LDL level of less than 130 mg/dL is desirable. If you have a personal history of coronary disease, your LDL cholesterol should be below 100 mg/dL.

Triglycerides, are composed of fatty acids and glycerol. Like cholesterol, they circulate in your blood but are stored in body fat. When you eat a meal, your triglycerides (and glucose) levels increase significantly. Gradually, if you body processes the fat efficiently, the level of triglycerides will decrease. Since triglycerides increase after eating, the test is normally given after fasting for 12 hours. While your triglycerides and glucose measurements are significantly affected by how recently you’ve eaten, total cholesterol and HDL are only slightly affected. Clinical consensus is that triglycerides should be below 150 mg/dL.

Lipid Profile or Lipoprotein Analysis is more detailed measure of the fats (lipids) in your blood. It consists of measuring your total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol and triglycerides and calculating your LDL cholesterol. Your doctor will usually order a lipid profile if the results from your total cholesterol test are above normal, or if you have other risk factors such as a low HDL, family history or heart disease. You should fast for accurate lipid profile results.



ARE YOU AT RISK?

Understanding Your Blood Cholesterol Test

Name _____

Testing Date _____

Tested by: **The Cholestech LDX**

RESULTS

	Your Value	Normal
Total Cholesterol	mg/dL	<200
Triglycerides	mg/dL	<150
Glucose	mg/dL	<100
HDL	mg/dL	>40
LDL	mg/dL	<130
TC/HDL Ratio		<4.5
Blood Pressure		

FASTING

- YES** (No food or drink except water in last 9-12 hrs)
- NO** (Fasting is required for accurate triglycerides, glucose and LDL values.)

Read brochure for detailed explanation of test results, terminology, and levels of risk

KNOWING YOUR TOTAL CHOLESTEROL

A number of factors can increase your risk for coronary heart disease. To make an accurate assessment your doctor will determine your lipid profile, overall health, weight, diet, blood pressure, amount of exercise and risk factors such as smoking, alcohol consumption, family history of heart disease, and cholesterol levels.

Cholesterol is one of several proteins that form your lipid profile. Cholesterol is comprised of both "good" and "bad" cholesterol. The "good" cholesterol is called High Density Lipoprotein (abbreviated as HDL). It actually prevents and reduces the build up of fat in your veins and arteries. Large amounts of HDL are found in the omega fatty acids of fish. The "bad" cholesterol is called Low Density Lipoprotein (abbreviated as LDL). High levels of LDL are found in many processed foods. Any products containing coconut oil, palm oil, or partially hydrogenated oil may be high in LDL.

Triglycerides (a combination of fatty acids and glycerol are another component of your lipid profile. Body fat contains high levels of triglycerides, which are used when the body needs extra energy. After eating, your triglyceride and glucose levels increase significantly. If your body processes the fat efficiently, the level of triglycerides naturally decrease.

Your doctor will carefully examine the test results of your lipid profile (cholesterol, LDL, HDL, triglycerides) to fully determine your risk for coronary heart disease.

PERIODIC TESTING

Your HDL and LDL levels can be changed by exercise and food selection. When altering your diet, it is important to increase consumption of food products high in high fiber (grains, fruit, vegetables, beans) and to lower consumption of food products, saturated fat (butter, meat, nuts, cream, egg yolks).

This process can actually be monitored by periodic testing at your local pharmacy, physician's office, or health care professional.

LEVELS OF DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

You can reduce the risk of heart disease if your lipid profile is within the below limits:

- ✓ A total cholesterol level of less than 200 mg/dL
- ✓ A low density lipoprotein (LDL) level below 130 mg/dL
- ✓ A high density lipoprotein (HDL) level of greater than 40 mg/dL
- ✓ A total cholesterol/HDL ratio of 4.5 or less
- ✓ Fasting triglyceride level below 150 mg/dL

IDENTIFYING RISK FACTORS

Modern medicine has identified a number of risk factors associated with coronary heart disease. Your medical professional can provide advice and possible preventative treatment for any of the below risk factors.

- ❖ **Family History of Premature Coronary Heart Disease (before age 55)**
Some families seem to be prone to heart disease. The cause may be genetic or caused by learning poor eating habits from your parents.
- ❖ **Low HDL (less than 35 mg/dL)**
Increase your level of good cholesterol by eating more foods high in omega fatty acids and eating less food high in saturated or hydrogenated fat.
- ❖ **High Blood Pressure (above 120/80 mm HG)**
A stressful job, high intake of salt, smoking, no exercise, eating foods high in saturated or hydrogenated fat (junk food) can lead to increased blood pressure.
- ❖ **High Blood Sugar Level (Diabetes Mellitus)**
High blood sugar has very serious long-term complications. Self-testing devices to monitor your sugar level have made diabetes much

easier to manage. Consult your doctor for details.

- ❖ **Overweight**

Excess fat in food you eat and lack of exercise cause weight gain. You must change the kinds of food you eat or increase your level of exercise to loose weight. Restrict your intake of simple or refined carbohydrates and do not eat any foods high in saturated fat or containing hydrogenated oil. Shedding excess pounds can help raise your HDL and lower your LDL levels, as well as improve glucose levels in Type II diabetes mellitus.

- ❖ **Cigarette Smoking**

Smoking lowers HDL levels and increases blood pressure. There are a number of new therapeutic programs that can help you stop smoking. If you do not want to stop, try to lower the number of cigarettes you smoke per day.

- ❖ **Age-Male Over 45**

Many men reduce physical activity when reaching middle age. Lack of exercise coupled with the natural thickening of arteries, caused by cholesterol/lipid build up, puts males over 45 at an increased risk of heart disease.

- ❖ **Age-Female After Menopause**

Estrogen is a key hormone that regulates multiple body functions. Recent studies have indicated that estrogen replacement therapy for menopausal women improves general health.

- ❖ **Inactivity and Lack of Exercise**

Walking is still considered one of the best general exercises. Try to walk before work, at lunch or after dinner. Hopefully this will lead to more active endeavors-biking, hiking, tennis, swimming, aerobics.

- ❖ **High Stress Environment**

Your medical professional can provide a number of suggestions to modify your life style to reduce stress. Severe cases may need more aggressive solutions ranging from biofeedback/acupuncture to pharmacological medications.