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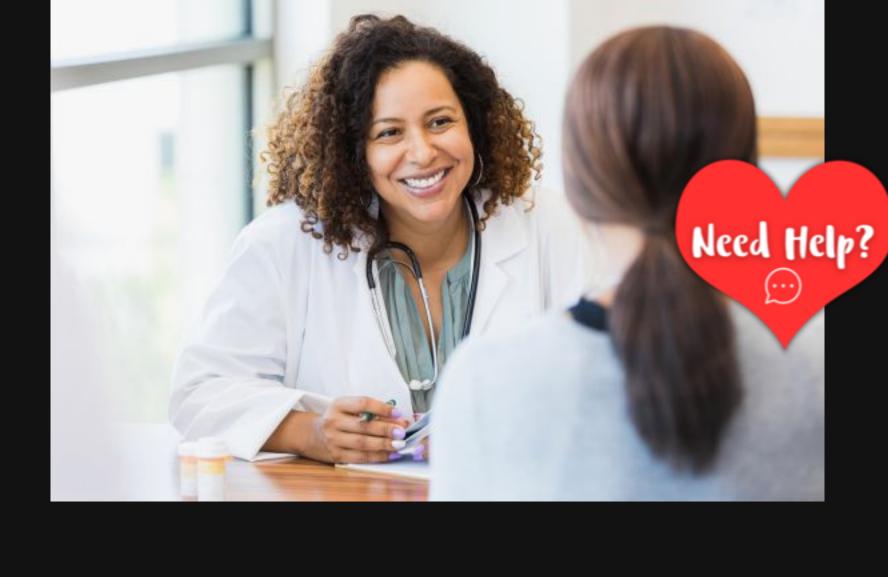
Understand your cholesterol test results

triglyceride results and see if they are in the healthy range.

Use this page to understand your cholesterol and

When you have a cholesterol test, ask your healthcare professional to explain the results, so you don't have any unnecessary worry or confusion.

It's not just your total cholesterol that's important, so your results will include different types of cholesterol. If you are only given your total cholesterol, ask for a break-down of the other numbers – it's possible to have a healthy total cholesterol (TC) number but an unhealthy balance of the different types of cholesterol.



Ask for a print out of your results if you are not able to speak to your GP, nurse or pharmacist.

What should your results include? As a minimum, you should be given your total cholesterol (TC) and HDL (good cholesterol), then you can work out your ratio of total cholesterol

to HDL cholesterol (written as the TC:HDL ratio). You might also have your triglycerides tested, these are another type of blood fat which are linked to heart disease.

Total cholesterol HDL cholesterol

This is sometimes written as 'serum cholesterol' or 'TC' and refers to your overall level of cholesterol.

Your non-HDL cholesterol is your total cholesterol minus

Non-HDL cholesterol

your HDL cholesterol. It's all the 'bad' cholesterol added together, including your LDL cholesterol. Ideally it should be as low as possible.

cholesterol out of your arteries, while your LDL cholesterol ('bad' cholesterol) can clog them up. HDL cholesterol levels of up to 1.4mmol/L are thought to offer the best protection, but our specialists believe that levels higher than this may not give you any additional benefit. **TC:HDL ratio**

Your HDL cholesterol ('good' cholesterol) helps clear the

You might be given a TC:HDL ratio, which is the ratio

of HDL compared to the total cholesterol. If not, you can work it out by a simple division: total cholesterol divided by HDL cholesterol. This should be as low as possible. Above 6 is considered high. The TC:HDL ratio should not just be looked at on its own, but

alongside all the other "numbers" i.e. it is important to look at both the HDL cholesterol and non HDL cholesterol, even if the TC:HDL ratio is low

What is a healthy cholesterol level? This table is a general guide for ideal cholesterol and triglyceride levels for healthy adults in the UK. If you have a condition such as heart

disease or diabetes, your target levels may be lower – your doctor will be able to tell you your individual targets. mg/dL mmol/L

Total (serum) cholesterol	below 5.0	below 193
Non-HDL cholesterol	below 4.0	below 155
LDL cholesterol	below 3.0	below 116
HDL cholesterol	above 1.0 for a man above 1.2 for a woman (ideally around 1.4. Very high levels may not give extra protection)	above 39 for a man above 46 for a woman
TC:HDL ratio	Above 6 is considered high risk - the lower this figure is the better	Above 6 is considered high risk - the lower this figure is the better

Triglycerides are another type of blood fat and your triglyceride levels can tell you more about your health. If your triglycerides are high, it can mean you're at risk of heart disease, liver disease and

What do your triglyceride results mean?

You might have your triglycerides tested when you have a cholesterol test.

What can raise your triglycerides?

Raised triglycerides and low HDL cholesterol

premature heart disease. It can be inherited and often occurs in people who carry their weight around their middle.

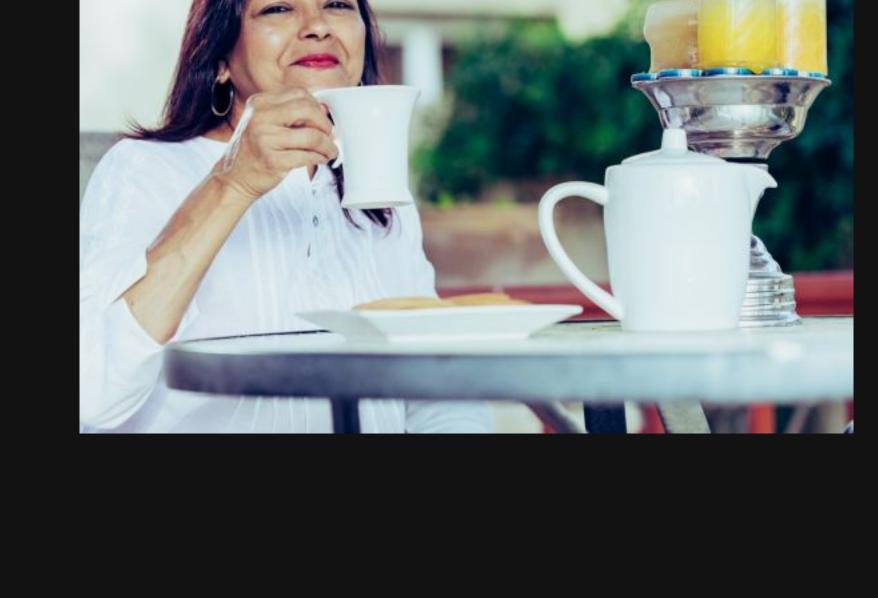
What is a healthy triglyceride level?

As a general rule, these are the ideal triglyceride levels for healthy

adults. Fasting triglycerides are where you fast for a period of time

People with high triglyceride levels often have a low HDL level as

well, which is an unhealthy combination that's often linked with



triglyceride	Delow 2.5Hillion/L	Delow 204Hig/al

below 1.7mmol/L

below 150mg/dL

before your blood test, usually 10-14 hours.

To convert cholesterol levels: To convert triglyceride levels: Cholesterol mg/dl = $mmol/l \times 38.6$ Triglyceride mg/dl = mmol/l x 88.5 Cholesterol mmol/l = mg/dl ÷ 38.6 Triglyceride mmol/l = mg/dl ÷ 88.5

measured in milligrams per deciliter (mg/dl). Here's how to convert from one to the other:

Converting from mmol/l to mg/dl

Women naturally have higher HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol) levels than men due to differences in the genes. Women should aim for an

In the UK, cholesterol levels are measured in millimoles per litre (mmol/l). If you have your cholesterol tested in Europe or the US, they will be

Cholesterol levels for men and women

Fasting triglyceride

Non-fasting

Cholesterol levels can rise during pregnancy

HDL cholesterol level above 1.2mmol/L while men should aim for above 1mmol/L.

During pregnancy, both cholesterol and triglyceride levels can significantly rise. We don't recommend getting a cholesterol test during pregnancy because your results won't be accurate. Our advice is to wait until at least 6-8 weeks after your baby is born or after you stop breastfeeding to get a cholesterol test. This means you don't need to worry unnecessarily.

triglycerides?

Cholesterol levels rise during the menopause

Women may also find their cholesterol levels rise during the menopause.

HDL levels differ for men and women

Do you need to lower your cholesterol and

Your doctor should look at your results in relation to any other risk factors for heart disease such as high blood pressure, being overweight, smoking, and other health conditions such as diabetes. If you are at higher risk or already have cardiovascular disease, for example if you have already had a heart attack, stroke or TIA, or have



more accurate result if you know your blood pressure numbers too. The heart age tool is designed for people aged 25 to 84. It's not suitable for you if you already have a cardiovascular disease such as heart attack or stroke, or an inherited high cholesterol condition such as Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH).

If you have high cholesterol, high triglycerides or an unhealthy

balance of blood fats, your doctor will probably recommend bringing

these levels down with lifestyle changes and sometimes treatments.

peripheral vascular disease, you should already be on cholesterol-

recommend lowering your non-HDL cholesterol ("bad cholesterol")

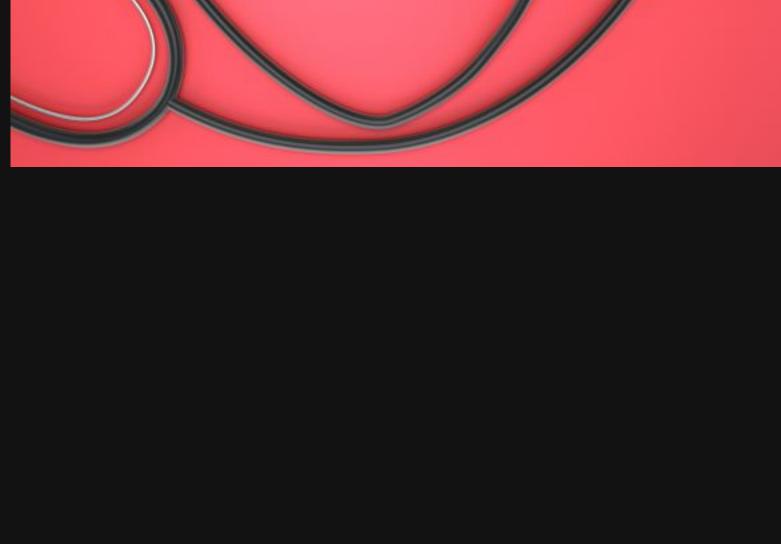
by at least a 40%. If your current non-HDL level is not known, then

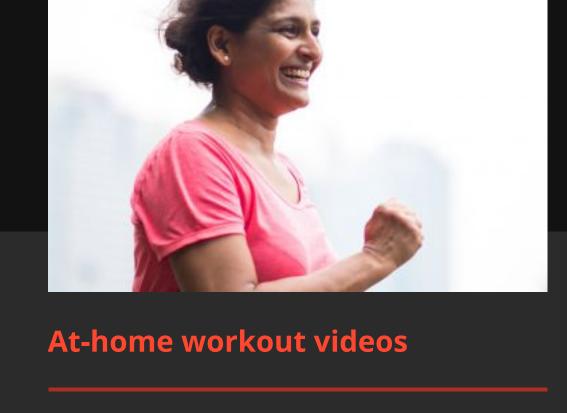
the guideline is to aim for below 2.5mmol/L (or LDL cholesterol

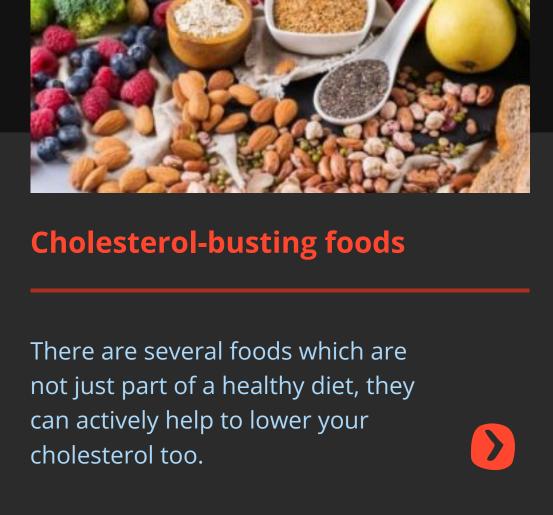
lowering medication such as statins. In the UK, guidelines

below 1.8mmol/L).

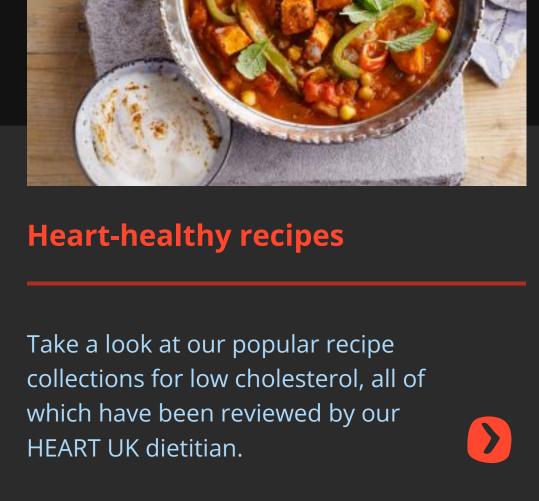
These risk assessment tools are only for those who do not have existing heart disease and stroke, or high risk conditions. You can also work out your own risk of developing heart disease over the next 10 years with the NHS Heart Age Tool. You will get a







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Cholesterol Helpline

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at-home workout videos.

looking after your cholesterol and

your heart. Get moving with these

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