

Foods for Lowering Cholesterol

1. Introduction:

1. High cholesterol levels, especially LDL ("bad" cholesterol), can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. Fortunately, certain foods can help lower cholesterol levels and improve heart health by promoting the production of HDL ("good" cholesterol) and reducing the absorption of cholesterol in the body.

2. Key Nutrients to Focus On:

1. **Soluble Fibre:** Helps reduce the absorption of cholesterol into the bloodstream.
2. **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Lower triglycerides and reduce the risk of heart disease.
3. **Plant Sterols and Stanols:** Block the absorption of cholesterol in the digestive system.
4. **Antioxidants (e.g., polyphenols):** Protect against oxidative stress, which contributes to the hardening of arteries.

3. Top Foods:

- **Healthy fats/ proteins:**
- **Fatty Fish (e.g., salmon, sardines):** Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which lower triglycerides and promote heart health.
- **Nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts):** Contain healthy fats and plant sterols that can lower LDL cholesterol.
- **Legumes (e.g., beans, lentils):** High in soluble Fibre and protein, legumes can help lower cholesterol levels when substituted for meat.
- **Fruits:**
- **Avocados:** Rich in monounsaturated fats, which help increase HDL cholesterol and lower LDL cholesterol.
- **Oils-Olive Oil:** Packed with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and antioxidants that help reduce LDL cholesterol.

Grains

- **Barley and Whole Grains:** High in soluble Fibre, which helps lower cholesterol by preventing its absorption.
- **Oats:** High in soluble Fibre, specifically beta-glucan, which helps reduce LDL cholesterol levels.

4. Scientific Backing:

1. A study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that eating oats significantly lowers LDL cholesterol due to their high soluble Fibre content.
2. Research published in the Journal of the American Heart Association highlighted that omega-3 fatty acids from fatty fish lower triglycerides and reduce the risk of heart disease.
3. Link: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/13-foods-that-lower-cholesterol-levels>

5. Fun Fact/Tip:

1. **Fun Fact:** Did you know that just eating 5-10 grams of soluble Fibre daily (about one serving of oatmeal or beans) can help reduce your LDL cholesterol levels by about 5%?
2. **Tip:** Swap out butter or margarine for heart-healthy olive oil when cooking to lower cholesterol intake and boost good fats.

6. Related Lifestyle Changes:

1. Regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, and avoiding trans fats are all important lifestyle changes that can complement a cholesterol-lowering diet.

7. External Links & References:

1. Harvard Health: [Foods that lower cholesterol](#)
2. WebMD: [Read more on foods that lower cholesterol](#)

CTA: Stay informed, stay healthy with tips on how to lower cholesterol