

Causes of sudden increase in cholesterol in the body

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Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance. Your body needs a certain amount of cholesterol to make cell membranes, vitamin D, etc. Your liver naturally makes all the cholesterol it needs. However, certain health conditions and behaviors can increase the amount of cholesterol in your blood.

High blood cholesterol can be dangerous to your health. It increases your risk of heart disease and stroke.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), high blood cholesterol is considered 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or higher. A healthy cholesterol level is below 200 mg/dL.

Some factors can cause cholesterol to rise faster than others. Here are the details.

Drink too much coffee

Thanks to its caffeine content, coffee is often associated with a rapid spike in blood pressure. But coffee can also raise your blood cholesterol levels.

A 2023 study found a link between drinking four cups of coffee a day and increased total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (the 'bad' cholesterol). But some types of coffee may cause cholesterol to rise faster than others.

In a small 2018 week-long study involving young adults, researchers linked espresso drinks to higher cholesterol. The study noted that espresso drinks contained more diterpenes than filtered or instant coffee.

To minimize your risk of high cholesterol from coffee, consider limiting drinks containing espresso.



Psychological pressure

Stress and cholesterol levels are also linked. Psychological stress can increase the risk of high LDL and total cholesterol. This may be due to the hormone cortisol, which spikes during times of stress. According to a 2020 article, high cortisol levels have the effect of increasing cholesterol in the body.

To reduce your risk of high cholesterol due to stress, you can try stress management techniques such as exercise, meditation, and breathing exercises.

Smoke

Smoking is another cause of a spike in cholesterol levels. This is due to nicotine, the main ingredient in tobacco products. Nicotine reduces the amount of HDL ('good') cholesterol in the blood, which helps remove LDL cholesterol.

The best way to reduce your risk of high cholesterol from smoking is to avoid or quit smoking.

Medicine

Some medications can increase cholesterol in the body. These include prescription drugs such as:

1. amiodarone

2. danazol
3. some diuretics
4. SGLT2 inhibitors
5. retinoid
6. anticonvulsant
7. immunosuppressant
8. antiviral drugs
9. growth hormone
10. interferon

In general, these drugs increase blood cholesterol levels by altering lipid metabolism. Some drugs, such as antipsychotics, can also increase cholesterol by promoting weight gain.

Pregnant

During pregnancy, it is natural for blood cholesterol to increase by 30% to 40%. This is because cholesterol is essential for the healthy growth and development of the fetus.

According to a 2021 article, high cholesterol levels during pregnancy are associated with increased levels of:

1. estrogen and progesterone
2. placental lactogen
3. insulin resistance

However, cholesterol can increase too much during pregnancy. This condition is called gestational hypercholesterolemia or maternal hypercholesterolemia.

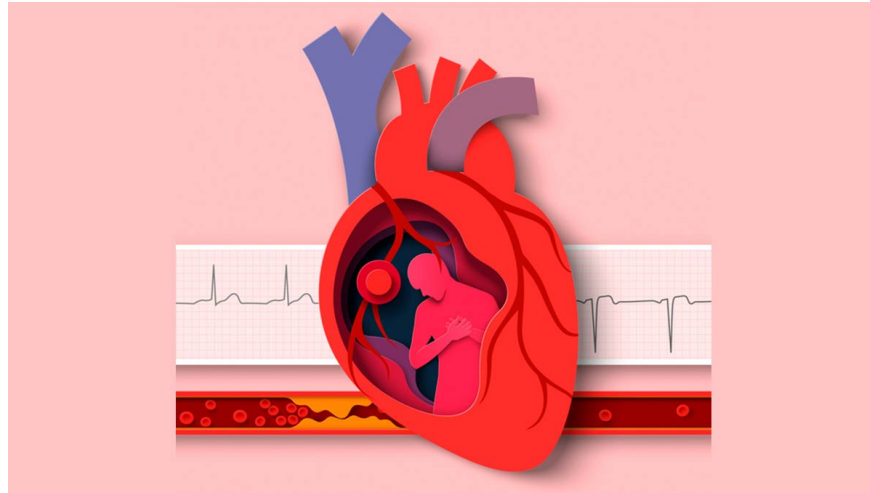
Your doctor can help control this condition by recommending dietary changes and prescribing lipid-lowering medications.

To prevent drug-induced high cholesterol, talk to your doctor. They can determine your risk and, if necessary, change your medication or dosage. There may be another drug in the same class that is less likely to raise your cholesterol.

Lose Weight Fast

Another potential cause of a temporary increase in cholesterol is rapid weight loss. In a small 2019 study, three adults lost weight rapidly by following a very low-calorie diet. In all three cases, their LDL cholesterol spiked temporarily before returning to normal levels. This may be related to changes in metabolism, the researchers said.

People who follow a ketogenic diet to lose weight quickly may also experience a spike in cholesterol levels. If you want to lose weight, be sure to work with a health care professional. They can help you lose weight safely and provide guidance about health-related side effects, such as a sudden increase in cholesterol.



In summary, certain behaviors or conditions can cause a sudden increase in blood cholesterol levels. These include drinking a lot of coffee, losing weight rapidly, smoking, and psychological stress. Pregnancy and taking certain medications, such as diuretics, antivirals, or steroids, can also cause a rapid increase in cholesterol levels.

High cholesterol levels can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. It is important to take steps to address sudden increases in cholesterol.

The only way to know if you have high cholesterol is to have a blood test. Your doctor can determine if you are at risk for high cholesterol due to short-term or long-term causes.

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