

## Where does cholesterol come from?

Cholesterol comes from your body and from food.

1. **Your body:** About 75% of cholesterol is made by your body. The amount your body makes could be based on your family health history. Your family history may cause your body to make too much cholesterol.
2. **The food you eat:** About 25% of your cholesterol comes from the food you eat. Eating food with cholesterol, saturated fats, and trans fats raises the cholesterol level in your blood.
  - **Saturated fats:** These are fats in foods that come mostly from animal fat. Some examples are butter, cream, and meat.
  - **Trans fats:** These fats are made by adding hydrogen to vegetable oils. This makes the oils more solid. You can find trans fats in some foods that are fried. Other examples are some margarines and shortening.



### TIP

Read food package labels to find out the fat content in the foods you eat.

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## Why is high cholesterol bad?

Too much LDL (bad) cholesterol can build up in the walls of your arteries. Over time, this buildup can lower blood flow. It can also cause coronary artery disease. Coronary artery disease affects the blood vessels in your heart.

### How do I know if I have high cholesterol?

Your health care provider may want to check your cholesterol with a blood test. The name of this test is a lipid panel or lipid profile. Your health care provider will choose when this test is right for you. Health care providers take into account your age and if you show any risk of high cholesterol or cardiovascular disease. This includes problems with your heart or blood vessels.

### TIP

Talk to your health care provider about your LDL (bad) cholesterol goal.

The lipid panel test includes:

- LDL (bad) cholesterol or LDL-C levels
- HDL (good) cholesterol or HDL-C levels
- Triglyceride levels
- Total cholesterol levels