

WHAT TO EAT TO GET TO GREEN

10 FOODS THAT CAN HELP YOU GET YOUR CHOLESTEROL LEVELS IN THE GREEN
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1 Outstanding Oats can help lower your LDL cholesterol. Oats are rich in soluble fiber which has been shown through a number of research studies to lower LDL cholesterol. Best sources include steel cut oats, rolled oats or oat bran. If you currently eat instant oatmeal, you are on the right track. But, making a switch to rolled oats to eliminate added sugars and other ingredients like preservatives and artificial colors or flavors is even better. Rolled oats cook quickly and you can add your own diced fruit, nuts, and cinnamon or vanilla to add flavor. If necessary, sweeten your cereal by adding your own sweetener. Then you can adjust the amount overtime to use as little as possible.

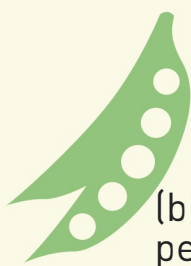
2 Better-than-rice barley

A whole grain that is well known as an ingredient in vegetable soup, but it also makes for a great side dish in situations where you might usually turn to rice or pasta. That's because barley has a chewy pasta-like texture. Barley is another great source of cholesterol lowering soluble fiber. Try to use barley in place of rice. You can find it in the dried bean section of your grocery store.



3 Beneficial beans

(black, pinto, soy, kidney, black-eyed peas, chick peas, etc.) are nutrition powerhouses that help to lower cholesterol in a couple ways. Beans are rich in soluble fiber like barley and oats. But, also, when you use beans as a substitute for meat, you lower the dietary cholesterol in your meal because beans are cholesterol free while they also are high in protein. Add beans to soups, salads and casseroles or include them as a side dish. You can also include bean based snacks or appetizers like roasted chickpeas or edamame (cooked soybeans). It's easy to eat beans every day!



4 Fabulous fruit (apples, berries, citrus) also contain soluble fiber. It's important to eat the whole fruit verses drinking fruit juice. The beneficial soluble fiber is lost in the processing. You can add berries, fresh or frozen, to a smoothie or a yogurt. Apples and oranges make for a great snack or a sweet replacement. Try serving a mix of fresh fruit topped with a drizzle of vanilla yogurt and a sprinkle of chopped almonds as a healthy dessert.



5 Glorious ground flax seed

contains a healthy amount of soluble fiber. It has the consistency of flour and can be substituted partially for flour in muffin or bread recipes. Adding just 2 tablespoons per day adds 3 grams of soluble fiber to your diet. You could add to cooked hot cereal or to your morning smoothie or even sprinkle it on top a breakfast yogurt with berries.



6 Sensational seeds

Flaxseed, Chia, and Sunflower seeds are also nutrition powerhouses. They contain beneficial fat that is helpful in cardiovascular risk reduction.

Flaxseed and chia seed contain rich amounts of the omega-3 fat called alpha-linolenic acid or ALA. Research has shown that people who eat more ALA rich foods have lower occurrence of cardiovascular disease.² Sunflower seeds are rich in plant sterols that can block the absorption of cholesterol from food helping to lower blood cholesterol levels. Seeds can be added to smoothies, breakfast cereals, breads, muffins, etc. You can make a [seed granola](#) for use as a yogurt topping.



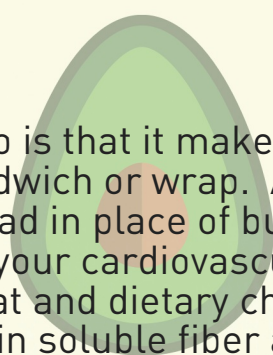
7 Notable nuts

Walnuts, almonds, and hazelnuts have been shown to help improve blood cholesterol levels and to help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.³ They are loaded with healthy plant based fat, but also contain carbohydrate and protein. Walnuts are particularly healthy because of the higher ALA or Omega-3 fat content. Aim to eat only about 1 ounce per day as they are high in calories and can contribute to weight gain. Nuts can be added to muffins, breads, salads or cereal or just eaten as a snack. All natural nut butter makes for a healthy alternative to butter or cream cheese.



8 Amazing avocado

Surprise a fat rich fruit! What is great about avocado is that it makes an excellent substitution for mayonnaise and/or cheese on a sandwich or wrap. Avocado is also great simply spread on toasted whole grain bread in place of butter. Using avocado in place of less healthy fats can help lower your cardiovascular risk because you are lowering the amount of saturated fat and dietary cholesterol. Avocado has two other things going for it—it is rich in soluble fiber and plant sterols.



9 Super salmon



The best choice for a fish dinner. Why? Well salmon is one of the richest fish sources of the beneficial Omega-3 fats, DHA and EPA. In fact, these heart healthy fats are very difficult to obtain from other foods you may be eating. Only fish and seaweed contain high amounts of these beneficial fats. Salmon is low in saturated fat and is much less likely to contain levels of contamination from mercury that is seen with larger predatory fish such as swordfish.

10 Healthy hummus

A combination of sesame seed tahini or paste and chick peas. It's rich in soluble fiber from the chick peas, but it's also a good source of plant sterols from the sesame seed tahini. Making hummus at home requires only a few ingredients--chick peas, sesame seed tahini, lemon juice, garlic, olive oil, herbs—and, it's quick and easy to make as long as you have a blender or food processor. Hummus makes for a terrific appetizer or snack lunch or as a spread for a vegetarian wrap.



As you go about planning your meals and snacks for the next week, think about the foods above and how you might include them in your daily routine.

Remember that **WHAT** you eat is as important in lowering your blood cholesterol and heart disease risk as what you **DON'T** eat!

REFERENCES

- 1 Othman, RA, et al. Cholesterol-lowering effects of oat b-glucan. Nutr Rev 2011;69(6):299-309
- 2 Pan A, et al. a-Linolenic acid and risk of cardiovascular disease: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Am J Clin Nutr 2012;96:1262-73
- 3 Estruch R, Ros E, Salas-Salvadi J, et al. Primary prevention of cardiovascular disease with a Mediterranean diet. N Engl J Med 2013;368:1279-90.