



## Heart Health and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

Heart disease is common in persons with CKD which can make you more likely to have a heart attack, chest pain (angina) or a stroke. It is important to follow your doctor's advice with ways to lower your risk of heart disease. You need to have your lipid (cholesterol) level in your blood checked to find out your risk. When was the last time you had your cholesterol/lipid panel checked? If so, do you know your numbers? There are 3 main types of blood lipids (fats):

**LDL** (Low-density lipoprotein) - "**Lousy**" cholesterol: This is the bad type of cholesterol that can build up and block your arteries, causing heart disease. You want your LDL to be less than 100.

**HDL** (High-density lipoprotein) - "**Happy**" cholesterol: This is the good type of cholesterol that keeps your arteries clear and open. You want your HDL to be 40 or higher to be "heart healthy."

**Triglycerides**: This is a type of stored fat with a small amount in your blood. High levels can raise your risk of heart disease. So, you want your triglyceride level to be less than 150.

Then, there is **Total Cholesterol** which is fatty substances that can block your blood vessels including the arteries that provide blood to your heart. Too high LDL and cholesterol can lead to higher risk for a stroke or heart attack. You want your total cholesterol to be less than 200.

Healthy eating with a diet low in saturated fats and cholesterol is best. Large amounts of saturated fats are found in foods from animal sources such as fatty meats, sausage, hot dogs, bacon and skin or fat on meat or poultry (chicken or turkey), in high-fat dairy products such as whole milk, cheese and ice cream, in butter, shortening or lard, and in chocolate and coconut. Focus on eating more fruits and vegetables daily (fresh is best), whole grains in breads and cereals, less red meat, chicken or turkey without the skin, and less fried or greasy foods.

Other ways to keep your heart as healthy as possible include:

- Stop smoking if you are a smoker
- Lose excess weight if you are overweight
- Get regular exercise if approved by your doctor
- Limit alcohol intake to one drink per day
- Get your lipid panel checked regularly by your doctor & know your numbers
- Take any medicines prescribed by your doctor to lower your lipids (cholesterol)