

## Live Healthier and Lower Your Cholesterol

Did you know that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) people with high total cholesterol have approximately twice the risk of heart disease as compared with those with optimal cholesterol levels?

September is National Cholesterol Education Month and OAOHN would like to encourage you to care for yourself, and your loved ones, by reminding you of the importance of preventive care.

The CDC says that more than 102 million American Adults (20 years or older) have total cholesterol levels at or above 200 mg/dL, which is above healthy levels. More than 35 million of these people have levels of 240 mg/dL or higher, which puts them at high risk for heart disease.

The great news is that you can greatly reduce your risk for heart disease by lowering your total cholesterol levels through lifestyle changes and preventive care.

To help keep your cholesterol at a healthier level, the CDC recommends the following:

- Eating low-fat and high-fiber foods (more fresh fruits, fresh vegetables and whole grains)
- Exploring the healthier options available at your company
- Getting at least two hours and 30 minutes of moderate or one hour and 15 minutes of vigorous physical activity a week (or those aged 6-17, getting one hour or more of physical activity each day)
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Quitting, if you smoke
- Taking medications as your doctor prescribes

Also, it's important to remember that as people, we are integrated and inseparable in body, mind and soul. Caring for one dimension of our being (e.g. spiritual health or lowering cholesterol levels) promotes healing in all areas of our health. We feel better, are less stressed, find life more purposeful and are more thankful.

Last, but not least, getting annual physicals and tests from your doctor is key in sustaining your health and preventing high cholesterol. Having a Primary Care Physician (PCP) who can coordinate your care is vital to your good health. A PCP typically specializes in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine or General Practice.

If you don't have a PCP, finding one is easy! Just visit your insurance carrier's website, look for the "find a doctor" area and follow the instructions.