

**Understanding Cholesterol – It’s Simple! My View: Robert DiBianco, MD**

**Why should I learn anything about cholesterol ?**

1. Cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart attack and stroke, which are our greatest health threats as adults and the leading causes of death and disability respectively.
2. Understanding the basics of cholesterol is actually quite easy.
3. For those of us without diabetes and who don’t smoke, cholesterol is probably our most significant risk factor for heart attack and with high blood pressure contributes to stroke.
4. For every 20% increase (approximately 50 points) in your total cholesterol, your risk of stroke, heart attack and death DOUBLES.
5. Very low cholesterol levels are proven to actually slow the growth of plaques and in some cases actually reduce plaque size.

**What’s the bottom line ?**

Appropriate life-style, diet and exercise, (with medications if needed) can importantly lower your cholesterol and your risk of life-threatening heart disease. Today’s medications, especially, some of the statins have proven themselves remarkably effective as well as safe. With a minimum of effort, drug-related side effects can almost always be avoided.

**What is there to know?**

- Total Cholesterol is really just that. It is the total cholesterol in the blood.
- The Total cholesterol is equal to 3 different types of cholesterol
  - “BAD” Type or LDL Cholesterol – which I like to call “L for Lousy”
  - “GOOD” Type or HDL Cholesterol – which we can call “H for Healthy or Happy”
  - “Triglycerides” or VLDL Cholesterol - another blood fat that is often elevated with obesity, diabetes and sedentary behavior and is an especially important risk in woman.

GOALS DATE:                      MEDS:	TOTAL CHOLESTEROL	LDL (LOUSY or BAD, - Lower the better)	HDL (HEALTHY or GOOD, -Higher the better)	TRIGLYCERIDES ( ANOTHER TYPE OF FAT, -Lower the better)
ACCEPTABLE VALUES	UNDER 200	UNDER 100	OVER 40 (MEN) OVER 50 (WOMEN)	UNDER 150
“BEST” VALUES	UNDER 175	UNDER 70	OVER 60	UNDER 100

**Best Values are for Patients with Coronary Artery Disease, Carotid Artery Disease, Peripheral Artery Disease (including aortic aneurysm, renal artery or other arterial obstructions with or without prior angioplasty or surgery) and Diabetes.**