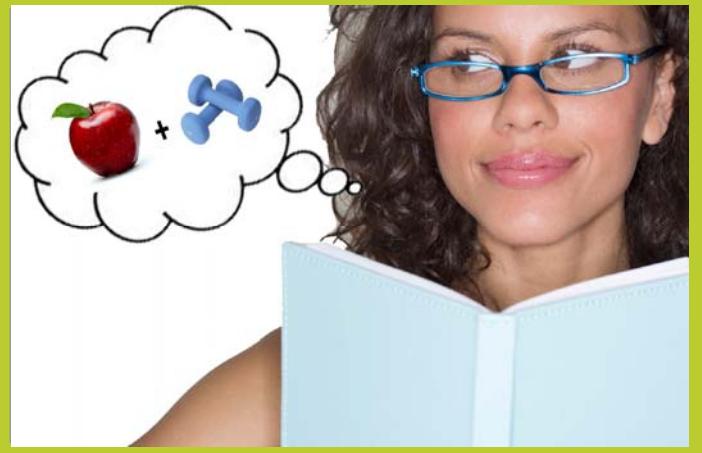


Your health should be considered your homework.

Preventing the development of cardiovascular disease (heart disease) is most likely on the bottom of every college student's priority list — beneath studying, writing papers, and exams. However, it is important to consider how many times procrastination has *not* paid off and you looked back wishing you had put more effort in sooner. Well, becoming more aware of your cholesterol level is another one of those times.

According to research conducted by the University of New Hampshire, 18-24 year olds are on the path toward chronic health diseases. Some studies illustrated that about 10% of students could have high cholesterol or related problems. It is very important for a young person to develop a healthy lifestyle at this point in life because the habits established now are carried into adulthood.

You'll thank yourself later!



Eat right and get moving!

Considerable amounts of cholesterol can be found in foods that have high saturated fat; no more than 7% of calories should be from saturated fat.

How to cut back on your intake of saturated fats:

- Choose leaner cuts of meat and trim fat off meats before eating.
- Remove skin from chicken, turkey, and other poultry prior to cooking.
- Drink low-fat (1%) or skim milk
- Buy low-fat or non-fat dairy products and sweet treats such as ice cream and frozen yogurt
- Use low-fat spreads instead of butter (Low saturated fat and no trans fats)
- Read nutrition labels and select foods low in saturated fat

In addition, regular exercise can help reduce your risk of developing heart disease. Even moderate-intensive activities (walking, dancing, or cleaning the house), if done daily, can make a positive impact. Regular physical activity is linked with a lower risk of heart disease. Physical activity can also help control weight, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Cholesterol 101

It's easier to understand the significance of your cholesterol level if you know what it is and the risks involved!

Cholesterol is needed to help build cell walls and create hormones, bile salts, and Vitamin D. The liver produces enough cholesterol that it is not needed in your diet. However, it is difficult for a majority of college students to avoid taking in more cholesterol since it is found in a variety of foods too—more specifically, types of food from animal sources. This means that meats, eggs and dairy products are packed with cholesterol — and vegetables, fruits, and grains contain none.

Cholesterol can't dissolve in the blood. It can slowly build up in the inner walls of the arteries that feed the heart and brain. It then can form plaque that narrows the arteries and makes them less flexible. This condition is known as atherosclerosis, which can result in a heart attack or stroke. Knowing your total cholesterol count, which can be determined through a simple blood test, can be an aid in preventing heart attacks and strokes.

Total cholesterol is made up of two different types of cholesterol—low-density lipoprotein (LDL), known as “bad” cholesterol and high-density lipoprotein (HDL), known as “good” cholesterol. A desirable total cholesterol level is below 170 mg/dL. When the result of a total cholesterol blood test is above 170 mg/dL, it indicates that further testing and diagnosis is necessary.

The Good, The Bad, The Ugly!



Watch the Health Services website for news about special cholesterol and glucose screening days.

www.niu.edu/healthservices

Desirable Cholesterol Levels

Total Cholesterol	Less than 170 mg/dL
Low LDL	Less than 110 mg/dL
High HDL	35 mg/dL or higher
Triglycerides	Less than 150 mg/dL