



HEART UK
THE CHOLESTEROL CHARITY

GETTING TO GRIPS

WITH

FH



A guide for teenagers living with
Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH)



WHAT IS **FAMILIAL** **HYPERCHOLESTEROLAEMIA** (FH)

FH IS AN INHERITED
CONDITION, WHERE AN
ALTERED GENE CAUSES
HIGH BLOOD CHOLESTEROL.

Having **FH** means that your
body makes too much
cholesterol. This can stick to
the insides of your blood
vessels and damage them.



LIVING WITH **FH**

Knowing how to 'Live with FH' means
you can grow up the same as anyone
else and live a healthy and active life.



HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

FH is relatively easy to diagnose and identifying it at a younger age is really important. Treatment is more effective when started early, before high levels of cholesterol can cause any damage to your blood vessels.

your **DOCTOR** may
SUSPECT **FH** if:
you have



your cholesterol is very high



other family members have been diagnosed with **FH**



there is a history of early cardiovascular disease in close family members





Understanding **CHOLESTEROL**

CHOLESTEROL IS MADE IN THE
BODY AND CARRIED IN THE BLOOD.
YOU ALSO GET IT FROM SOME OF
THE FOODS YOU EAT.

Cholesterol is really important to
keep our bodies working properly,
but too much can be unhealthy.

TYPES OF CHOLESTEROL

LDL = **BAD**
LOW DENSITY
LIPOPROTEIN **CHOLESTEROL**

HDL = **GOOD**
HIGH DENSITY
LIPOPROTEIN **CHOLESTEROL**

HOW IS IT
TESTED?

A blood test will
reveal your levels of

“BAD” and
“GOOD”
cholesterol.

TOP TIPS

CHECK OUT OUR
TOP TIPS
FOR REDUCING YOUR
BAD CHOLESTEROL...



tip 1.

EAT



HEALTHILY



HEALTHY EATING IS
IMPORTANT FOR
EVERYONE - NOT JUST
THOSE WHO HAVE FH.

Choosing to eat healthily is about making small gradual changes such as swapping those not so healthy habits with great new healthy ones.



But what you eat on a regular basis is what matters. So occasionally eating less healthy foods is unlikely to result in increased blood cholesterol.

(HOOSE MORE...



- FRUITS & VEGETABLES
- NUTS, SEEDS & PLAIN POPCORN
- WATER
- OATCAKES & CRUMPETS
- LOW FAT YOGHURT, MILK & CHEESE
- VEGETABLE SPREADS & OILS
- LEAN MEAT, FISH & BEANS
- WHOLEMEAL BREAD
- MUESLI OR PORRIDGE
- BROWN RICE & PASTA



(HOOSE LESS...



- CHIPS
- CRISPS, SWEETS & CHOCOLATE
- FIZZY, SUGARY DRINKS
- BISCUITS & CAKES
- FULL FAT YOGHURT, MILK & CHEESE
- BUTTER
- SAUSAGES, BURGERS & FATTY MEAT
- WHITE BREAD
- SUGARY BREAKFAST CEREALS
- WHITE RICE & PASTA



tip 2. **STAY ACTIVE**



BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE BENEFITS EVERY PART OF THE BODY, INCLUDING THE MIND.

Exercising causes the body to produce endorphins. These are chemicals that can help you feel good.



Staying **ACTIVE** can help you...



INCREASE YOUR GOOD (HOLESTEROL)

KEEP A HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT

LOOK AND FEEL GREAT



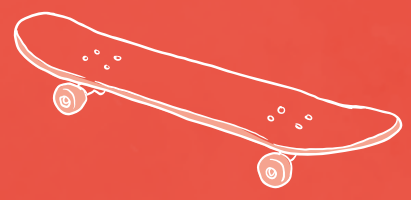
INCREASE YOUR MUSCLE STRENGTH

BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

SLEEP WELL



MAKE FRIENDS





tip 3. DON'T SMOKE

SMOKING INCREASES
YOUR CHANCES OF HEART
DISEASE, PARTICULARLY
IF YOU HAVE FH.

Smoking can reduce your levels of good cholesterol and can damage the insides of healthy blood vessels.

Smoking is also highly addictive, very expensive and socially unacceptable.

For help to quit smoking, visit:
www.nhs.uk/smokefree

A hand is shown pouring beer from a bottle into a glass. The background is a textured, light yellow color. The text is in a bold, yellow, hand-drawn font. The overall style is casual and informative.

tip 4.

REDUCE YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE

TOO MUCH ALCOHOL INCREASES THE AMOUNT OF TRIGLYCERIDES IN YOUR BLOOD. THIS IS A FORM OF FAT. TOO MUCH TRIGLYCERIDES MEANS YOUR BODY IS STRUGGLING TO PROCESS FAT PROPERLY.

If you're over 18 years old, you can still enjoy drinking alcohol sensibly.

For information on safe guidelines, visit: www.drinkaware.co.uk

tip 5.

TAKE YOUR

MEDICINES

MEDICINES HELP CONTROL YOUR TOTAL CHOLESTEROL LEVEL AND REDUCE YOUR BAD CHOLESTEROL.

It's important that you keep taking them.



A statin is a small tablet, which you will usually need to take every day. Statins are best taken at night but you may choose to take it at a different time of the day if it helps you remember and that is ok too.

Statin help the body filter cholesterol out of the blood and are very effective for lowering your bad cholesterol.



HOW LONG
SHOULD YOU
TAKE THEM ?



TAKING STATINS CONTINUES FOR LIFE AND STOPPING YOUR MEDICATION WILL CAUSE YOUR CHOLESTEROL TO RETURN TO A HIGH LEVEL WITHIN A FEW WEEKS.

If you ever forget to take a tablet, taking more the next time isn't a good idea. Instead, just return to your usual dosage.

Keeping active and eating healthily are very important when you have FH, but for most of us, this is not enough to reduce your cholesterol levels sufficiently and it's likely that you will need to take a medicine.

LET'S RECAP!

SO IF YOU HAVE **FH** YOU CAN STAY
FIT AND **HEALTHY**
BY...





5. TAKING YOUR MEDICINES



4.

**NOT DRINKING
TOO MUCH
ALCOHOL**



**3. NOT
SMOKING**



HEART UK saves lives by helping people avoid heart attacks and strokes caused by high cholesterol.

Follow us:     




www.heartuk.org.uk

Helpline: **0345 4505 988**

Email: ask@heartuk.org.uk

What do we do?

We provide expert support, education and influence, by:

-  campaigning for proper diagnosis, treatment and care
-  helping people manage high cholesterol
-  providing education and training for healthcare professionals

Literature orders and general enquiries: **01628 777 046**

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