



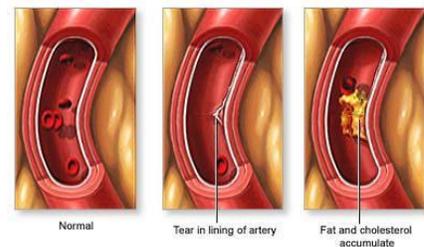
1 Day 'til Go Red! National Wear Red Day Friday, February 3rd

Life's Simple 7: **CONTROL CHOLESTEROL!**

The American Heart Association reports that over 107 million Americans have borderline high or higher cholesterol. In at least one major worldwide study of some 29,000 men and women, researchers found that an elevated cholesterol level was among the TOP risk factors for heart disease. But, studies also show that lowering your cholesterol can reduce your risk of having a heart attack by as much as 40%.

Cholesterol is essential for good health and plays a key role in a number of bodily functions. How much cholesterol YOU produce is affected by your genetics and by what you eat. When you have too much LDL, the so-called “bad” cholesterol, it combines with white blood cells and forms plaque in your veins and arteries that can lead to a heart attack or stroke. High levels of HDL, or the “good cholesterol”, assist in removing the bad cholesterol by carrying it to the liver where it’s processed and eliminated. Bottom line: You want your LDL cholesterol and triglycerides low and your HDL cholesterol high! **Aim for an LDL level \leq 100 mg/dl; a Triglyceride level of $<$ 150 mg/dl ; an HDL level of \geq 40 for men and \geq 50 for women.**

Progression of plaque build-up in coronary artery



You can't tell by looking at someone if they have high cholesterol because it's not just high in sedentary, overweight individuals. Some individuals aren't overweight, exercise regularly and still have high cholesterol. These individuals are genetically prone to make too much LDL. If you're one of them, you will probably need to continue to eat a low-fat diet AND take medication to reduce your risk. For the rest of the population, experts tell us that we're driving up our cholesterol with a high-fat diet and lack of exercise.



The Medical Center of Plano