

An important step to take in reducing heart attacks and strokes is controlling the level of cholesterol within the body. Cholesterol is a needed substance in the body, but having too much cholesterol can lead to clogged arteries that reduce or block blood flow to the heart and brain. Cholesterol can be lowered by watching the intake of trans fat, being physically active and through proper management of medication. Remember that cholesterol is the C in the ABCS in heart disease and stroke prevention and take action to reduce and control cholesterol in the body!

*\*If you have any activities that promote the awareness of high blood cholesterol, please [let us know](#).*

This document is intended to ensure consistent messaging among partners and it includes:

**Alignment with Priorities of the *Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke: Ten-Year Update***

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*Alignment with Priorities of the **Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke: Ten-Year Update***

- Effective Communication  
*Focus – Prevention and public health*  
Communicate to legislators, policymakers, and the public at large the nation’s vital stake in sustaining and building upon the prevention and public health the Affordable Care Act, e.g. the National Prevention Council, Prevention and Public Health Fund, and others.
- Strategic Leadership, Partnership & Organization  
*Focus – Public health – Healthcare collaboration and integration*  
Integrate public health and health care into a public health system effective in supporting community-level prevention policies and programs, e.g. the Million Hearts Initiative.
- Taking Action  
*Focus – Cardiovascular health and health equity*  
Develop, advocate, and implement policies, programs, and practices aimed to improve the nation’s cardiovascular health in terms of the Healthy People 2020 objectives and AHA metrics – addressing tobacco use, overweight/obesity, physical activity, healthy diet (including reduction in sodium and artificial trans-fat intake), blood pressure, cholesterol, and fasting plasma glucose); and ensure that all such actions reach everyone, especially those most vulnerable due to unfavorable social and environmental conditions.

## Key Points

- Have cholesterol levels checked once every five years by a health care professional.
- Cholesterol control can be achieved by reducing intake in trans fats, increasing physical activity and properly taking medication. Patients and health care providers should work together to find a plan that will work best
- Eating healthy foods low in trans and saturated fat, such as fruits and vegetables, is an important way to reduce cholesterol.

## Sample Newsletter Article

The ABCS in the Million Hearts® Initiative all work together to meet the goal of reducing 1 million heart attacks by 2017. Cholesterol control, the C in the ABCS, works with appropriate aspirin use, blood pressure control and smoking cessation and prevention to improve the heart health of persons. Cholesterol is a needed substance in the body that helps with certain functions. However, too much cholesterol, a waxy substance, can end up collecting along the sides of the arteries and eventually cause reduced or stopped blood flow to the heart and brains. Controlling cholesterol, as in controlling blood pressure, should be achieved through a conversation between a patient and their health care provider. But some steps that can be taken now to manage cholesterol levels include:

- Having cholesterol checked at least every five years, or as recommended per health condition.
- Including more fruits and vegetables in every meal and reducing foods with saturated and trans fats
- Taking medication as prescribed by a doctor or nurse
- Being physically active at least 30 minutes each day.

Keep cholesterol under control and follow the ABCS to a healthy heart!

## Additional Information

The [National Forum 13th Annual Forum Meeting](#) will be held October 21, 2015 in Washington, DC, focusing on highlighting best practices in Advancing the ABCs of Prevention, including appropriate aspirin use, blood pressure and cholesterol control and smoking cessation. To register go to [National Forum 13th Annual Meeting Registration](#).

## Additional Resources for Patients, Providers, and Health Professionals

### Million Hearts® Tools

<http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/tools.html>

### About cholesterol

[http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/Cholesterol\\_UCM\\_001089\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/Cholesterol_UCM_001089_SubHomePage.jsp)

### **My Life Check - Life's Simple 7**

My Life Check® was designed by the American Heart Association with the goal of improved health by educating the public on how best to live. These measures have one unique thing in common: any person can make these changes, the steps are not expensive to take and even modest improvements to your health will make a big difference. Start with one or two. This simple, seven step list has been developed to deliver on the hope we all have--to live a long, productive healthy life. Learn more at [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/My-Life-Check---Lifes-Simple-7 UCM 471453 Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/My-Life-Check---Lifes-Simple-7_UCM_471453_Article.jsp)

### **Cholesterol Tools and Resources**

[http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/CholesterolToolsResources/Cholesterol-Tools-and-Resources UCM 001216 Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/CholesterolToolsResources/Cholesterol-Tools-and-Resources_UCM_001216_Article.jsp)

### **Heart Disease Conditions**

<http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/conditions.htm>

### **Educational Materials for Patients**

[http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/materials\\_for\\_patients.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/materials_for_patients.htm)

### **Educational Materials for Professionals**

[http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/materials\\_for\\_professionals.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/materials_for_professionals.htm)

#### Social Media Resources

##### Pages and Handles

- [AHA Twitter](#)
- [AHA Facebook](#)
- [CDC Twitter](#)
- [CDC Facebook](#)
- [Million Hearts Twitter](#)
- [Million Hearts Facebook](#)
- [National Forum Twitter](#)
- [National Forum Facebook](#)

##### Twitter Posts

- Cholesterol levels should be checked once every 5 years. Have you had yours checked? Retweet if you have! <http://bit.ly/1qctfwg>
- Patients should work w/ their health care providers to find a cholesterol plan that works best them: Learn more at <http://bit.ly/1e3R4gf>
- Eating healthy foods low in trans & saturated fat helps reduce cholesterol. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/1dXZtT2>.

##### Facebook Posts

- Doctors recommend that patients have their cholesterol levels checked once every five years. Have you had yours check in the past five year? Share if you have. For more heart healthy tips, visit: [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/SymptomsDiagnosisMonitoringofHighCholesterol/How-To-Get-Your-Cholesterol-Tested UCM 305595 Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/SymptomsDiagnosisMonitoringofHighCholesterol/How-To-Get-Your-Cholesterol-Tested_UCM_305595_Article.jsp)

- Cholesterol control can be achieved by reducing intake in trans fats, increasing physical activity and properly taking medication. It's important to talk to your health care provider to create a cholesterol plan that will work best for you. Learn more at [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/PreventionTreatmentofHighCholesterol/Prevention-and-Treatment-of-High-Cholesterol\\_UCM\\_001215\\_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/PreventionTreatmentofHighCholesterol/Prevention-and-Treatment-of-High-Cholesterol_UCM_001215_Article.jsp)
- Eating healthy foods low in trans and saturated fat, such as fruits and vegetables, is an important way to reduce cholesterol. Don't believe us? Learn more at [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/PreventionTreatmentofHighCholesterol/Know-Your-Fats\\_UCM\\_305628\\_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/PreventionTreatmentofHighCholesterol/Know-Your-Fats_UCM_305628_Article.jsp)