

[IMAGE]

## Know Your Numbers

By Editorial Staff

Ignorance may be bliss, but not when it comes to cholesterol. While most people understand the health risks associated with high cholesterol, women in particular aren't taking the time to proactively monitor and control it.

According to a nationwide survey released by the Society for Women's Health Research, 79 percent of women know how much they weighed in high school, but less than one-third know their cholesterol number. Moreover, only half of the women surveyed had a cholesterol test done in the past year. Although 63 percent said they were concerned about cholesterol and nearly 60 percent indicated they were actively trying to control their cholesterol, only 32 percent knew their actual cholesterol number.

Women generally are well-educated about cholesterol and its impact on their overall health. Almost nine out of 10 women (88 percent) surveyed know high cholesterol is linked to hardening of the arteries and heart disease, and almost as many (85 percent) know it can lead to stroke. In terms of prevention, the vast majority of women know how to control cholesterol: exercise (96 percent), eating more fruits and vegetables (95 percent) and eating foods low in fat (94 percent).

Three women holding up an arm in triumph. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **The survey also produced the following results:**

- One in three (32.9 percent) did not know that women can exercise regularly and maintain a healthy diet, but still have dangerously high cholesterol levels.
- Women with a family history of high cholesterol are only slightly more likely than the general population (66 percent vs. 60 percent) to say they are actively trying to manage their cholesterol levels.
- More than one-third (36.3 percent) of women were surprised to learn that high cholesterol has no symptoms.
- Only 35 percent of women surveyed know any of the four key numbers for monitoring cholesterol: total cholesterol level, LDL level, HDL level and triglyceride (blood fat) level.
- Ninety percent of women (90.6 percent) believe that some cholesterol is good, yet only a third of

women (38 percent) correctly identified HDL as the "good" cholesterol. An equal number got it wrong.

- Only 21 percent of women know their high-density lipoprotein (their HDL level - the "good" cholesterol), with an equally low number knowing their low-density lipoprotein (their LDL level - the "bad" cholesterol).

If you're concerned about your cholesterol, or if it has been a while since you had it checked, take the first step toward improving your health - find out your numbers and discuss them with your doctor.

Page printed from:

[http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=962&no\\_paginate=true&no\\_b=true](http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=962&no_paginate=true&no_b=true)