

[IMAGE]

The Cholesterol That Kills

By Editorial Staff

Want to avoid dying prematurely from cardiovascular disease? One way is to keep your low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol in the safe range. What's the problem with LDL? It's known as the "bad" cholesterol, and it gets that moniker because unlike the high-density lipoprotein (HDL) variety, LDL cholesterol can build up on the walls of your arteries, increasing your odds of developing heart disease. (HDL is known as "good" cholesterol because it actually helps *remove* LDL cholesterol from the bloodstream.)

A new study in *Circulation*, a journal of the American Heart Association, suggests even moderate levels of LDL cholesterol can elevate your cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk compared to having lower LDL levels. In fact, in examining more than 36,000 adults with no history of heart disease or diabetes, participants with LDL levels in the bloodstream of 100-159 mg/dL had a significantly higher risk (30-40 percent higher) of dying from cardiovascular disease during the 27-year study period compared to participants with very low LDL levels (100 mg/dL or lower). Participants with LDL levels between 160 mg/dL and 189 mg/dL had a whopping 90 percent higher risk of dying from CVD compared to people in the lowest LDL group.

Cholesterol - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Now here's where it gets really interesting: Current guidelines don't suggest cholesterol-lowering medication until 190 mg/dL. That means, according to this study, even people with moderate / borderline levels of LDL were dramatically more likely to die from a cardiovascular event. Your doctor can tell you more about cholesterol (including why it's vital for the body in certain amounts), the difference between LDL, HDL, triglycerides and total cholesterol, and how to keep your cholesterol in the *healthy* range.

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