Self-Care Steps for High Cholesterol

**Eat less fat.**
Adults should reduce their total fat intake to 25 to 30 percent or less of their daily calories and saturated fat intake to less than 10 percent. This is a major step in lowering blood cholesterol. Eliminating all fat is not necessary.

**Eat less saturated fat.**
Saturated fat raises LDL more than anything else in the diet. All animal fats and some vegetable fats - coconut oil, palm kernel oil, palm oil, cocoa butter, and hydrogenated oils - are high in saturated fat.

**Eat less cholesterol.**
Cholesterol found in certain foods also can raise your blood cholesterol level. By eating less fat and limiting foods high in saturated fat, you can reduce your intake of dietary cholesterol. The USDA 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends you try to keep your daily cholesterol intake to 300 mg or less.

**Eat less trans fat.**
Trans fat is a type of fat found primarily in processed foods that have hydrogenated vegetable oils. It raises the LDL cholesterol.

**Eat more dietary fiber.**
Studies show soluble fiber can help lower blood cholesterol. Some good sources of soluble fiber include oats, barley, dried beans and peas, apples, pears and carrots.

**If you are overweight, consider losing a few pounds.**
People who are overweight often have high blood cholesterol levels. A weight loss of 10 to 20 pounds can be beneficial.

**Be active.**
Activity plays an important role in promoting heart health. Aerobic activities, such as swimming, biking, jogging, and cross-country skiing, are especially beneficial. If you are not exercising now, try walking or another activity. Always check with your health care provider before increasing your activity level.