

# Medicare's Preventive Care Services



To Manage Cholesterol  
and Your Heart Health

# Are You at Risk For Heart Disease?

Risk factors for heart disease include:

- Age (45 or older for men, 55 or older for women)
- Family history of premature cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- Being overweight
- High fat and high cholesterol diet
- Lack of exercise
- Stress

## Cardiovascular Screening

Medicare now offers a free cardiovascular screening blood test that checks your cholesterol and Triglyceride levels. Cardiovascular screenings are important because high total cholesterol, low HDL-C, and high Triglycerides are hard to detect without the test. This screening will tell if you have unhealthy cholesterol or Triglyceride levels and can help your doctor diagnose your cardiovascular problems in the early stages.

**The earlier you are treated, the more likely you can avoid life-threatening events such as heart attacks and strokes.** You may also be able to make lifestyle changes (like changing your diet and activity level) to lower your cholesterol level and stay healthy. There is no deductible or copay for this new test. Medicare will cover cardiovascular screening blood tests once every five years for all asymptomatic beneficiaries.

# What Is Total Cholesterol?

Cholesterol breaks down into three categories:

- bad cholesterol (LDL)
- good cholesterol (HDL)
- Triglycerides (TG)

Unhealthy levels of any of them can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke, which can be debilitating and life-threatening.

**This chart highlights the National Cholesterol Education Program recommendations for lipid levels. A total cholesterol level of less than 200 mg/dL is considered desirable.**

<b>LDL</b> Bad	Low-density lipoproteins (“bad cholesterol”) build up in arteries to form plaque, which can restrict blood flow to your brain and other organs.	
	<b>LDL LEVELS</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>
	100 mg/dL or less	Optimal
<b>HDL</b> Good	High-density lipoproteins (“good cholesterol”) carry cholesterol from the blood vessels to the liver, where the body can eliminate it.	
	<b>HDL LEVELS</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>
	40 mg/dL or less*	Low
<b>TG</b> Bad	At unhealthy levels, Triglycerides can form plaque in your arteries and restrict blood flow, which can lead to heart disease.	
	<b>TRIGLYCERIDE LEVELS</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>
	150 mg/dL or less	Normal

\* American Diabetes Association HDL goal levels are:  
Women – 50 mg/dL or less – Low  
Men – 40 mg/dL or less – Low

Talk to your doctor about your total cholesterol, LDL, HDL, and TG levels. If any are not at a healthy level, ask your doctor how you can improve them to reduce your risk for heart disease.

**If you do not know your total cholesterol, LDL, HDL, and TG levels, ask your doctor about Medicare’s free cardiovascular screening.**

# How Can You Reduce Your Risk for Heart Disease?

**Eat Healthy Foods** – Eating the right foods and the right amounts can help you live a longer, healthier life. For a heart healthy diet, eat a variety of foods including:

- Vegetables – especially dark-green leafy and deep yellow vegetables such as spinach and carrots, and legumes, such as lima beans and green peas.
- Fruits – such as melons, berries and citrus fruits, or juices, such as orange or grapefruit.
- Fish, poultry, meat, eggs and dried bean (such as navy, kidney or black beans) – especially products low in fat, such as lean meat and poultry prepared without skin.
- Dairy products – such as milk, yogurt and cheese, especially low-fat or fat-free dairy products.
- Grains – especially whole grains, such as oatmeal or whole grain breads.

**Keep Active** – Physical activity can help prevent heart disease and reduce your risk of diabetes and high blood pressure. Exercise

also helps you stay at a healthy weight, reduce stress, sleep better and feel better overall.

All kinds of physical activity, whether it is moderate or vigorous, will help you stay healthy.

Aim for at least moderate activity –

such as brisk walking, raking leaves, house cleaning – for 30 minutes most days of the week.





**Maintain a Healthy Weight** – Being overweight increases your risk of heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure. Your doctor can tell you what you should weigh for your height. You can get to your healthy weight and stay there by doing two things: eating right and being physically active.

**Stop Smoking** – More than 430,000 Americans die each year from smoking. Smoking causes illnesses such as heart and lung disease, stroke and cancer. Exposure to second-hand smoke also increases risk. When you are getting ready to quit:

- Make a plan and set a quit date.
- Tell your doctor that you want to quit smoking and get medicine to help you quit.

**Check Your Cholesterol Levels** – Have your cholesterol levels checked, including HDL-C and Triglycerides, at least every five years or more frequently if your results are not within normal limits. Medicare provides coverage of cardiovascular screening blood tests for all beneficiaries (without symptoms) every five years. Medicare's cardiovascular screening blood test evaluates total cholesterol, HDL-C and Triglyceride levels.

# Medicare Preventive Services and Screenings

Service	Who Is Covered	Frequency	Beneficiary Pays
<b>Initial Preventive Physical Examination (IPPE)</b> <i>Also known as the "Welcome to Medicare" Physical Exam</i>	All Medicare beneficiaries whose first Part B coverage began on or after January 1, 2005	Once in a lifetime benefit per beneficiary <i>Must be furnished no later than 6 months after the effective date when the first Medicare Part B coverage begins</i>	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
<b>Ultrasound Screening for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)</b>	Medicare beneficiaries with certain risk factors for abdominal aortic aneurysm <i>Important – Eligible beneficiaries must receive a referral for an AAA ultrasounds screening as a result of an IPPE</i>	Once in a lifetime benefit per eligible beneficiary, effective January 1, 2007	Copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Cardiovascular Disease Screenings</b>	All asymptomatic Medicare beneficiaries <i>12-hour fast is required prior to testing</i>	Every 5 years	No copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Diabetes Screening Tests</b>	Medicare beneficiaries with certain risk factors for diabetes or diagnosed with pre-diabetes <i>Beneficiaries previously diagnosed with diabetes are not eligible for this benefit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 screening tests per year for beneficiaries diagnosed with pre-diabetes</li> <li>• 1 screening per year if previously tested but not diagnosed with pre-diabetes, or if never tested</li> </ul>	No copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Diabetes Self-Management Training (DSMT)</b>	Medicare beneficiaries at risk for complications from diabetes or recently diagnosed with diabetes <i>Physician must certify that DSMT is needed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 10 hours of initial training within a continuous 12-month period</li> <li>• Subsequent years: Up to 2 hours of follow-up training each year</li> </ul>	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
<b>Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)</b>	Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with diabetes or a renal disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1st year: 3 hours of one-on-one counseling</li> <li>• Subsequent years: 2 hours</li> </ul>	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
<b>Screening Pap Tests</b>	All female Medicare beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually if high-risk, or if childbearing age with abnormal Pap test within past 3 years</li> <li>• Every 24 months for all other women</li> </ul>	Copayment/coinsurance for Pap test collection <i>(No copayment/coinsurance for Pap lab test)</i> No deductible
<b>Screening Pelvic Exam</b>	All female Medicare beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually if high-risk, or if childbearing age with abnormal Pap test within past 3 years</li> <li>• Every 24 months for all other women</li> </ul>	Copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Screening Mammography</b>	All female Medicare beneficiaries age 40 or older	Annually	Copayment/coinsurance No deductible
	Female Medicare beneficiaries ages 35 - 39	One baseline	

For more information about Medicare's Preventive Services, visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) on the Web or call **1-800-633-4227**. TTY users should call **1-877-486-2048**.

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<b>Bone Mass Measurements</b>	Medicare beneficiaries at risk for developing osteoporosis	Every 24 months <i>More frequently if medically necessary</i>	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
<b>Colorectal Cancer Screening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medicare beneficiaries age 50 and older</li> <li>Screening colonoscopy: individuals at high risk; no minimum age requirement</li> <li>No minimum age for having a barium enema as an alternative to a high-risk screening colonoscopy if the beneficiary is at high risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fecal occult: Annually</li> <li>Flexible Sigmoidoscopy: Every 4 years or once every 10 years after having a screening colonoscopy</li> <li>Screening Colonoscopy: Every 24 months at high risk; every 10 years not at high risk</li> <li>Barium enema: Every 24 months at high risk; every 4 years not at high risk</li> </ul>	No copayment/coinsurance or deductible for Fecal Occult Blood Tests  For all other tests copayment/coinsurance apply No deductible
<b>Prostate Cancer Screening</b>	All male Medicare beneficiaries age 50 or older (coverage begins the day after 50th birthday)	Annually	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
	All male Medicare beneficiaries age 50 or older (coverage begins the day after 50th birthday)	Annually	No copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Glaucoma Screening</b>	Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes mellitus, family history of glaucoma, African Americans age 50 and over, or Hispanic Americans age 65 and over	Annually for beneficiaries in one of the high-risk groups	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
<b>Influenza (Flu)</b>	All Medicare beneficiaries	Once per flu season in the fall or winter <i>Medicare may provide additional flu shot if medically necessary</i>	No copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Pneumococcal</b>	All Medicare beneficiaries	Once in a lifetime <i>Medicare may provide additional vaccinations based on risk</i>	No copayment/coinsurance No deductible
<b>Hepatitis B (HBV)</b>	Medicare beneficiaries at medium to high risk	Scheduled dosages required	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible
<b>Smoking and Tobacco-Use Cessation Counseling</b>	Medicare beneficiaries who use tobacco and have a disease or adverse health effect linked to tobacco use or take certain therapeutic agents whose metabolism or dosage is affected by tobacco use	2 cessation attempts per year; each attempt includes maximum of 4 intermediate or intensive sessions, up to 8 sessions in a 12-month period	Copayment/coinsurance Deductible

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# Quick Tips to Keep Your Heart Healthy

- Talk to your doctor about cholesterol levels – total cholesterol, LDL-C, HDL-C, and Triglycerides.
- Have all three cholesterol levels checked in partnership with your doctor according to your health history and level of risk.

DATE	LDL-C	HDL-C	TRIGLYCERIDES	TOTAL-C

## OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

Search these sites, or check your local library, for information about LDL-C, HDL-C, and Triglycerides and how they relate to heart disease.

### [www.cms.hhs.gov/CardiovasDiseaseScreening/ CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES \(CMS\) SPONSORED](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CardiovasDiseaseScreening/CENTERS%20FOR%20MEDICARE%20AND%20MEDICAID%20SERVICES%20(CMS)%20SPONSORED)

- Information on heart disease and Medicare cardiovascular disease screening and preventive services

### [www.americanheart.org/cholesterol](http://www.americanheart.org/cholesterol) AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION SPONSORED

- Information on cholesterol, risk factors, exercise. and healthy recipes