

# 4 FOODS THAT LOWER CHOLESTEROL

*Cholesterol is a type of fat that is found in the blood. Too much cholesterol can cause a build-up of plaque on the inside of your arteries, which can lead to heart disease. Fortunately, several foods can help lower your cholesterol levels.*

*Many foods can help lower cholesterol levels. Some of the most effective include oats, nuts, foods fortified with sterols and stanols, fatty fish, and beans.*



## OATS

Many foods can help lower cholesterol, and oats are one of the best. Oats contain a soluble fiber called beta-glucan that can help reduce bad cholesterol levels by up to 10 percent.

In addition, oats also contain antioxidants, which can help protect your heart health. Add oats to your breakfast cereal or smoothie, or cook them into a healthy oatmeal cookie recipe.



## NUTS

Nuts are a high-quality source of protein and fiber, and they're also a good source of monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs), which can help lower cholesterol levels. Nuts have been shown to reduce bad cholesterol levels by up to 15%.

A recent study showed that incorporating 30 grams of nuts into your daily diet could cut your risk of heart disease by nearly 30%. Some great choices include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts.



## BEANS

Beans are a great food to lower cholesterol because they are high in fiber and protein. A cup of cooked beans can provide up to 15 grams of fiber, 60 percent of the daily recommended amount. Fiber helps sweep cholesterol out of the body before it has a chance to attach itself to artery walls.

Beans are also a good source of protein, which can help control weight and keep cholesterol levels down. Try adding a can of black beans to your lunchtime salad, or make a batch of black bean brownies for a healthy dessert.



## FATTY FISH

Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, mackerel, and herring are all high in omega-3 fatty acids, beneficial for heart health. Studies have shown that omega-3 fatty acids can help lower bad cholesterol levels by 20%.

Omega-3 fatty acids also help protect the heart by reducing inflammation and helping to keep the heart rhythm steady. Try to include fatty fish in your diet at least twice a week.

## CONCLUSION

Many foods can help lower cholesterol levels, and incorporating some of them into your diet is a great way to improve your heart health. Be sure to check the labels on packaged foods to find those fortified with sterols and stanols, and try to include fatty fish, beans, and nuts in your regular diet. By making some simple changes, you can lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease.

This resource is provided by PreventionLink of Southern Maryland. Find more tools and resources to prevent and manage chronic disease at [PreventionLinkMD.com](http://PreventionLinkMD.com) or scan the QR code.



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