



High Cholesterol Video

Companion Discussion Guide

This guide provides optional discussion questions that you can use with the video. There are several natural points in the video where you can pause the video and have a group discussion. You can choose which pauses and questions make sense for your group and time frame.

Pause the video at minute 4:33 on the slide titled “What Determines Cholesterol Levels”

- Cardiovascular risk is related to both how high cholesterol levels are and how long blood vessels are exposed to high levels. How do you think this impacts recommendations for screening and treatment?

Pause the video at minute 8:05 on the slide titled “Testing and Target Levels”

- Many people do not realize that high cholesterol can have such a large genetic/inherited component. Did you? Do think this and the need for childhood screening is understood in our community? How could we help spread awareness about this?

Pause the video at minute 12:20 on the slide titled “Prevention and Management”

- Cardiovascular disease risk tends to increase as we get older. How do you think this might affect your cholesterol targets as you age? How do you think this might affect treatment recommendations as you get older?

At the end of the video

- What are some foods that you commonly eat that are high in saturated fats? What are some possible swaps that you could make that could lower your saturated fat intake?
- What are some of the barriers to healthy lifestyle behaviors in our community?
- What are some ideas about how we could help address these barriers?
- What do you think are some of the barriers that keep people who could benefit from statins from trying them? What are some things that could be done (by

health care providers, policy makers, community members) to help address these barriers?

Quiz-style questions that could be asked at the end of the video:

- Would eating a lot of potato chips in your diet increase or decrease your risk of high cholesterol? *Answer: Increase.*
 - Follow-up Question: Why? *Answer: Potato chips are usually high in saturated fat because they are deep fried. Saturated fat increases LDL levels.*
- Would exercising regularly increase or decrease the risk for heart disease related to high cholesterol? *Answer: Decrease.*
 - Follow-up Question: Why? *Answer: Exercise increases HDL (the “good” cholesterol) and lowers LDL (the “bad” cholesterol) and triglycerides, all of which lower cardiovascular risk.*
- Would making an effort to fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit at each meal be expected to increase or decrease your risk of high cholesterol? *Answer: Decrease.*
 - Follow-up Question: Why? *Answer: Vegetables and fruits are high in fiber which decreases LDL. (Of course, it would be important that the vegetables are prepared in ways that do not involve a lot of saturated fat!)*
- Which of the following people should be screened for high cholesterol if they have not had it checked recently: a 10-year-old, a 20-year-old, a 40-year-old, a 60-year-old? *Answer: All of them.*
 - Follow-up Question: Why? *Answer: Children should be screened for high cholesterol between the ages of 9-11 to check for Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH), and adults should be screened regularly starting at age 19.*
- If you are screened and found to be positive for Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH), should others in your family be screened for FH? *Answer: Yes.*
 - Follow-up Question: Why? *Answer: If someone is diagnosed with FH, their first degree relatives (parents, siblings, children) are at higher risk for having it too. They should be screened so that they can find out if they have it and take steps to lower their cardiovascular risk if needed.*

General tips for facilitating discussion:

- **Encourage all voices.** Create a welcoming, encouraging environment. Gently invite, but don't force, quiet members to join the conversation.
- **Acknowledge contributions.** Thank participants for sharing their thoughts and experiences and highlight valuable insights.
- **Ask follow-up questions as needed.** If participants offer short answers, consider following up by asking "Why do you think that is?" or "Tell me more" to dig deeper.
- **Gently steer the conversation back to the topic if it gets off track.**