

Arthrosclerosis

Arthrosclerosis occurs when high levels of cholesterol within the blood builds up in the arteries and veins, causing thickening and hardening of the vessels and impeding blood flow to the brain, kidneys, genitals, extremities and even the heart.

Symptoms include aching muscles, fatigue, cramping, high blood pressure, shortness of breath and pain in the chest. If left untreated Arthrosclerosis may lead to high blood pressure, angina, heart attack, stroke or sudden cardiac death.

Cholesterol is basically fat that binds to lipoproteins within the blood. There are 2 forms of lipoproteins, LDL and HDL. HDL is considered safe, even in higher concentrations as it binds to excess fatty cholesterol and carries it to the liver to be broken down. LD Lipoproteins however seem to encourage cholesterol build up in the arteries and organs of the body.

To stay healthy, your LDL cholesterol level should not exceed 100 milligrams per deciliter. It is very serious if your levels are raised to 190 milligrams per deciliter or higher. HDL levels work differently, so more is better. Sixty milligrams is desirable, below 50 is low for women and below 40 for men is low.

Triglycerides levels are also important. These are the benchmark of extra calories, sugar and alcohol stored in the body. It is normal when they read below 150 milligrams per deciliter.

So next time you are at your GP, consider having your cholesterol levels checked.

Foods to lower cholesterol...

Almonds, bananas, carrots, cold water fish, dried beans, garlic, oats, olive oil, salmon, strawberries and walnuts. A diet high in fiber reduces serum cholesterol and combines well with plenty of exercise, sunlight and cold-pressed olive oil.

Foods that increase cholesterol...

Alcohol, cakes, candy, soft drinks, coffee, gravy, pies, refined foods, refined carbohydrates, black tea, tobacco, margarine, butter, red meats and egg yolks.

Lunch Recipe

Gently roast 1 cup of buckwheat in a saucepan then add 2 cups of water and bring to the boil, simmer for 20 minutes or until the water soaks into the grain. In a bowl mash 1 can beans, cooked corn (use a fresh cob or two, the more corn the sweeter the dish), carrot and capsicum together. When the buckwheat is cooked, spread on a plate, then add mashed avocado with curry powder, then the bean mix. Top with cucumbers, grated lettuce and red onion.

Foods Rich in Folic Acid

Chickpeas, spinach, parsley, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, almonds, broccoli, cashews, walnuts, cabbage, cauliflower, avocado, oranges.

Foods rich in B vitamins

Mackerel, salmon, trout, beef steak, tuna, cottage cheese, rice, bananas, avocados, capsicum, raisins, cornmeal, hazelnuts.