

# The role of diet and lifestyle in managing familial hypercholesterolemia.

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## Abstract

**A genetic condition known as Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH) causes the body to metabolise cholesterol differently, which leads to elevated levels of LDL cholesterol, generally referred to as "bad" cholesterol. The likelihood of getting cardiovascular disease, such as heart attack and stroke, is increased by this condition. Diet and lifestyle modifications are crucial parts of controlling FH, in addition to drugs like statins that can help manage high cholesterol levels.**

**Keywords:** Familial hypercholesterolemia, Nutritional sciences, Disease management, Integrative medicine.

## Introduction

Adopting heart-healthy habits is the first step in managing FH through food and lifestyle. This includes engaging in regular exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, and abstaining from tobacco use. These behaviours can lower cholesterol levels and lower the risk of cardiovascular disease [1].

A cholesterol-lowering diet and supplementation with plant sterols and stanols are recommended for lipid control in children and adults with familial hypercholesterolemia. There is limited evidence to evaluate such an intervention in this population [2].

Dietary restrictions are intended to lower consumption of foods high in saturated and Trans fats, which can raise cholesterol levels. Instead, those who have FH should concentrate on eating a diet full of fresh produce, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats like those in fish, nuts, and seeds. It's critical to pay attention to portion sizes in addition to selecting nutritious foods. Eating too much of anything can cause weight gain and have a bad effect on cholesterol levels, including eating too much of healthful foods. Working with a qualified dietician to create a meal plan that is customised to each person's needs and preferences may be beneficial [3].

Familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) is characterized by a genetic alteration of cholesterol transport and metabolism, leading to elevated Total Cholesterol (CT) and low-density Lipoprotein Cholesterol (LDL-C) levels and early onset of atherosclerosis. According to current guidelines, diet and promotion of healthy habits are the first line of treatment. Little is known about the effectiveness of a cholesterol-lowering diet and healthy lifestyle on plasma cholesterol and lipid profiles in children and adolescents with FH [4].

Alcohol use is another crucial factor. However, excessive alcohol drinking can raise cholesterol levels and increase the risk of heart disease, even though moderate alcohol consumption may have some health benefits. As a result, people with FH should keep their daily alcohol intake to a maximum of one drink for women and two for men.

Additionally, it's crucial to take into account lifestyle elements like stress and sleep deprivation that might affect cholesterol levels. Chronic stress and poor sleep can make the body more inflammatory, which raises cholesterol and raises the risk of cardiovascular disease. Aiming for at least 7-8 hours of sleep each night and engaging in stress-management exercises like yoga or meditation can help lower these risks [5].

## Conclusion

While medicine is frequently required to control high cholesterol levels in people with FH, dietary and lifestyle modifications can also be very helpful in controlling this illness. A reduction in the risk of cardiovascular disease can be achieved by establishing heart-healthy habits, selecting wholesome foods, and being mindful of portion sizes. Individuals with FH can create a detailed strategy to manage their disease and enhance their general health by consulting with medical professionals and certified dietitians.

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