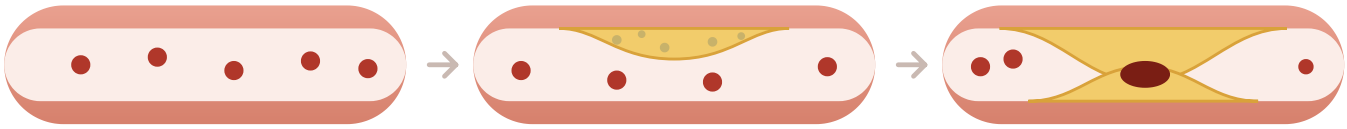
EquaHeart

Dyslipidemia (high cholesterol)

Elevated **low-density lipoprotein (LDL, "bad") cholesterol** builds up in artery walls, increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke. It causes no symptoms; only a blood test can detect it.

1 Atherosclerosis (plaque build-up in the arteries)



Healthy artery
Blood flows freely

Plaque forms
LDL collects in the artery wall

Narrowed or blocked artery
A clot may cause a heart attack or stroke

2 Understanding your lipid profile

Results in mmol/L. Fasting is usually not required.

LDL cholesterol "bad"	Deposits in artery walls. The main target of treatment.
HDL cholesterol "good"	Carries cholesterol away from the arteries.
Non-HDL cholesterol	Total cholesterol minus HDL: all plaque-forming cholesterol. Reliable without fasting.
Triglycerides	Another blood fat; often raised by alcohol, refined sugars and excess weight.
Apolipoprotein B (ApoB)	Measures the number of plaque-forming particles. May be used instead of LDL.
Lipoprotein(a)	Largely inherited; measured **once in a lifetime**. 50 mg/dL (100 nmol/L) or more raises risk.

3 Who should be tested

Adults aged **40 and older**, or after menopause. Earlier with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, obesity, smoking, hypertension in pregnancy, or a family history of early heart disease or high cholesterol, and possibly for people of South Asian or Indigenous ancestry.

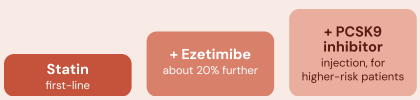
4 Lifestyle measures

Mediterranean-style diet
Vegetables, fruit, whole grains, legumes, nuts, olive oil. Oats, soy and plant sterols also help.

Regular physical activity
At least 150 minutes a week, plus strength training twice a week.

Avoid tobacco; limit alcohol
Avoid smoking, limit alcohol and maintain a healthy weight.

5 Medication



Treatment depends on your **10-year cardiovascular risk** (Framingham Risk Score). A statin is usually recommended for people with cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, most adults with diabetes, and anyone with **LDL of 5.0 or higher** (possible familial hypercholesterolemia, an inherited form).

With cardiovascular disease and LDL of **1.8 or higher** on a statin, other medications may be added. Discuss side effects with your doctor rather than stopping. Over-the-counter fish oil supplements are not recommended.

Source: Pearson GJ, et al. 2021 Canadian Cardiovascular Society guidelines for the management of dyslipidemia for the prevention of cardiovascular disease in adults. Can J Cardiol 2021;37:1129–50.
This guide is general information and does not replace advice from your healthcare provider.

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