



# Cholesterol And Your Health

## Washington Elementary School District EBT

### Take easy steps toward a healthier you with improved cholesterol numbers

It's possible to have a serious health risk but not know it, even if you feel perfectly fine. If your cholesterol numbers are higher than what doctors consider healthy, you are at higher risk for heart disease and stroke. The good news is you can take easy steps to help push your cholesterol numbers into a healthy range without the need for medicine.

#### Get heart-smart by finding out your numbers

Your first stop on the road to a healthy new you is knowing your cholesterol numbers. You can do this through a simple blood draw that's included in your wellness program, preventive care benefits or as ordered by your doctor. If you have questions about what's included in your benefits plan, you can call **Meritain Health Customer Service** using the **phone number** on your member **ID Card**.

#### How fat can harm your health

Your blood normally contains fats that you need to be healthy, including cholesterol. But, when too much fat builds up in your blood, it can clog the arteries in and around your heart. When this happens, the blood flow to your organs and brain can become blocked. This dangerous condition can cause you to have a heart attack or stroke.

#### Understand your blood fat levels to understand your risk

Your blood profile will include the numbers for four common blood fats: LDL (Low-Density lipoprotein) cholesterol, HDL (High-Density Lipoprotein cholesterol), triglycerides, and your total cholesterol. You can understand your level of risk by comparing your profile to the following chart:

|                              | Total cholesterol            | LDL   | HDL                     | Triglycerides   |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Healthy</b>               | 200 mg or less               | 100 mg or less  | More than 40 mg         | 150 mg or less  |
| <b>Somewhat high</b>         | Somewhat high:<br>200-239 mg | Near healthy:<br>100-129 mg<br>Somewhat high:<br>130-159 mg | n/a                     | Somewhat high:<br>150-99 mg                           |
| <b>Too high/<br/>too low</b> | High:<br>240 mg              | High:<br>160-189 mg<br>Very high:<br>190 mg and above       | Low:<br>Less than 40 mg | High:<br>200-499 mg<br>Very high:<br>500 mg and above |

- Your **total cholesterol** is a measure of the amount of cholesterol you have in your blood
- Your **HDL cholesterol** is also known as *good cholesterol*. Lipoproteins carry the cholesterol molecules to be released as waste, which reduces the amount of cholesterol in your blood. When these numbers are high, it means you are releasing more cholesterol from your system.
- Your **LDL cholesterol** is also known as *bad cholesterol*. These lipoproteins carry the cholesterol that will stay in your blood, so you want these numbers to be low.
- Your **triglycerides** are another fatty substance present in your blood, and high levels have been linked to heart disease. That's why you want these numbers to be low.

*This flyer is solely for informational purposes and is not intended to provide medical advice. You should consult with your healthcare provider regarding any questions you have about your health and/or medical treatment.*

