High cholesterol and your lifestyle.

GOOD CHOLESTEROL VS. BAD CHOLESTEROL
Cholesterol is a fat-like substance present in every cell in the body, and it is needed for your body to function properly. Cholesterol doesn’t dissolve in the bloodstream. Instead, it is carried through the body by two types of transporters called lipoproteins.

**LDL (LOW-DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN) = “BAD” CHOLESTEROL**
LDL (bad) cholesterol tends to form fatty deposits that cling to the walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart and brain. The resulting clogging can lead to a heart attack or stroke.

**HDL (HIGH-DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN) = “GOOD” CHOLESTEROL**
HDL (good) cholesterol removes excess cholesterol from the bloodstream, thus reducing the risk for coronary heart disease and stroke.

WHAT DO MY NUMBERS SAY?

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<tr>
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<th>LDL</th>
<th>HDL (mg/dL)</th>
<th>TOTAL CHOLESTEROL (mg/dL)</th>
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<td>&lt; 100</td>
<td>&lt; 40</td>
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<td>100 - 129</td>
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<td>130 - 159</td>
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Optimal | Near optimal | Borderline high | High | Very high | Desired | Borderline high | High

Talk with a UnitedHealthcare nurse today for more information on high blood cholesterol.
WHAT CAUSES HIGH CHOLESTEROL?
High levels of bad cholesterol can be inherited from your parents or can result from a poor diet. You can’t change your genes, so your diet is generally a good place to start to make a difference in your health. However, there are other steps you can take to lower high cholesterol.

MODIFY YOUR DIET
Eat less total fat, especially saturated fats.

That means:
• Use monounsaturated oils (olive, canola, grapeseed).
• Choose fat-free or one-percent-fat dairy products.
• Select “good” proteins, like poultry (without the skin) and fish that contain high levels of healthy omega-3 fatty acids (like salmon, turbot and sea bass).
• Limit your intake of red meat.
• Eat more green leafy vegetables, fruits and grains. They don’t contain any cholesterol.
• Add complex carbohydrates like oatmeal, oat bran products and legumes (beans, peas and lentils) to your diet.

SMOKING
Just in case you need another reason not to smoke, LDL cholesterol is usually increased and HDL cholesterol is decreased by smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke.

GET MOVING
Regular exercise, such as swimming, walking, biking or playing tennis, can help increase your good cholesterol and lower your bad cholesterol.
• Talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.
• Most healthy adults can aim for at least 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise a week. Add muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week.

WHAT ABOUT MEDICATION?
Even when you make changes in your diet, get more exercise and manage your weight, you may still have high cholesterol. Medication therapy may be required to help you lower your cholesterol levels. This therapy is usually more effective when combined with diet modification and cardiovascular exercise. Eat right, get moving and talk to your doctor about how you can keep your cholesterol numbers where they belong.