

Four ways to lower your cholesterol during National Cholesterol Education Month

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O'FALLON, IL — September is National Cholesterol Education Month and serves as a reminder to increase efforts to address one of the biggest risk factors for cardiovascular disease: high cholesterol.

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that your body uses to build cells and make vitamins and other hormones. It's not necessarily bad, but too much cholesterol can pose a

problem. Cholesterol comes from two main sources: the liver and animal products. Foods high in saturated and trans fats also contribute to raising cholesterol by causing the liver to create even more.

High cholesterol is one of the leading factors of cardiovascular disease and stroke. Keeping your numbers in check can go a long way toward preventing cardiovascular issues.

“Know your numbers and what to do about them,” said Dr. Scott Marrus, Prairie Heart Institute cardiologist. “If there is an issue, oftentimes small lifestyle changes can bring your numbers in line, but if that’s not enough medication may be prescribed.”

HSHS St. Elizabeth’s Hospital and Prairie Heart Institute offers four ways to lower your cholesterol, as also recommended by the American Heart Association:

- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- The best way to lower your cholesterol is reduce your intake of saturated fat and trans fat.
- A heart-healthy diet emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, poultry, fish, nuts and non-tropical vegetable oils, while limiting red and processed meats, sodium and sugar-sweetened foods and beverages.

Become more physically active

- Physical activity is important. At least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise a week is enough to lower both cholesterol and high blood pressure.

Quit smoking

- By quitting, smokers can lower their bad cholesterol (LDL) and increase their good cholesterol (HDL) levels.

Lose weight

- Being overweight or obese tends to raise bad cholesterol and lower good cholesterol. But a weight loss of as little as 5% to 10% can help improve cholesterol numbers.

Learn more information and even take a high cholesterol risk assessment at heart.org/cholesterol.

Join 5k Walk and Health Fair hosted by Prairie Heart Foundation

The Prairie Heart Foundation is proud to host Powered by Prairie, a 5k walk and health fair, on September 24, 10 a.m. to noon, at HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital, located at One St. Elizabeth Boulevard in O'Fallon. 100% of proceeds benefit the local Prairie cardiac rehab.

Register at prairieheart.org/events by September 23, 2022.

Prairie Cardiac Rehab Participants - \$20 per person

Includes Prairie t-shirt and water bottle

Individual - \$25 per person

Includes Prairie t-shirt and water bottle

Family - \$80 for four

Includes four Prairie t-shirts and water bottles

Get powered up as you and your loved ones walk your way to a healthy heart! Plus, enjoy a variety of activities to fuel your heart healthy journey. The event is rain or shine, with prize drawings throughout the morning. Please, no pets.

If you have any questions, please contact Brandy Grove at brandy.grove@hshs.org or 217-494-1194.

About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high-quality Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our physician practices and 15 local hospitals in two states – Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O'Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](https://www.hshs.org) is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit www.hospitalsisters.org.