



**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact**  
Stephen Kuehler | [stephen.kuehler@knoxhospital.org](mailto:stephen.kuehler@knoxhospital.org)  
940-657-3535

## **Taking Control of Your Cholesterol is More Important Than Ever**

*Lifestyle changes help reduce the risk of serious heart issues.*

KNOX CITY, Texas (Sept. 18, 2020) – Most people know that high cholesterol is a leading cause of heart disease, including heart attack and stroke. Recent studies have shown that those with underlying health issues, including heart disease, are also at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Managing your cholesterol and cardiovascular health is more important than ever.

“Staying on top of your health is always important, but now more than ever, it is critical,” Dr. Laura Hart, a physician in Knox City. “Small actions can lead to large impacts when it comes to heart health. A first step is getting a better understanding of your cholesterol levels.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), individuals with certain cardiovascular conditions, including heart failure, high blood pressure and coronary artery disease are at elevated risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

Among the key risk factors for heart disease is high cholesterol. The CDC estimates that an estimated 95 million Americans have high cholesterol.

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that your body produces and helps your cardiovascular system to function. There are two types of cholesterol: high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and low-density lipoprotein (LDL). However, too much LDL cholesterol can build up in your arteries, forming plaque and raising the risk of serious cardiovascular issues, including heart attack and stroke.

Although certain prescription medications ordered by a medical provider can help individuals with especially high cholesterol, lifestyle changes are usually the first recommendation.

### **Good Nutrition**

Eating foods that are high in saturated fats can contribute to high cholesterol and increase the risk of heart disease. Foods such as certain meats, cheese and other dairy products can contain high levels of fats that can affect cholesterol.

Choosing foods that are high in fiber, such as whole grains, beans, and foods that contain healthy fats such as avocados and nuts can help manage cholesterol levels.

**MORE**



## **Taking Control of Your Cholesterol is More Important Than Ever**

### **Page 2**

#### **Exercise for Your Heart**

Physical activity can help you manage your cholesterol level and control your weight. The CDC recommends two hours and 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise each week. Exercise can take the form of cycling, running, or brisk walking.

Excess weight can increase levels of LDL cholesterol. The excess weight can affect how your body regulates cholesterol in your body.

#### **Stop Smoking**

Studies have long shown a link between smoking and cholesterol levels. Smoking can also damage your arteries, increasing the risk of a buildup of plaque. It can also contribute to high blood pressure.

“Smoking has so many negative impacts on your health,” Dr. Hart says. “Quitting this habit alone can make a dramatic impact and honestly set you up for a better future.”

It is recommended that adults, starting at ages 20 and older have their cholesterol levels checked every five years. The frequency of the cholesterol checks may increase depending on the findings.

Cholesterol checks are a simple blood test often ordered during a yearly wellness exam. A wellness exam is covered by Medicare and most private insurance plans once a year. These check-ups are an opportunity to assess your overall health and find out if you are due for certain health screenings.

Dr. Hart adds that some people during the COVID-19 pandemic have chosen to delay cholesterol checks and other important checkups.

“Never postpone the healthcare you need, including preventive checkups,” Dr. Hart emphasizes. “By now, it sounds cliché, but it certainly remains true: taking care of your health is now more important than ever.”

If you or a loved one is concerned about cholesterol and cardiovascular conditions, please call Knox City Clinic at 940-657-3906 or the Munday Clinic at 940-422-5271. For more information about local healthcare programs and services in Knox County, please visit [www.knoxhospital.org](http://www.knoxhospital.org).

**MORE**



**Taking Control of Your Cholesterol is More Important Than Ever**  
**Page 3**

**About Knox County Hospital District**

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education, and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit [www.knoxhospital.org](http://www.knoxhospital.org).

###