



WOMEN'S HEALTH

The Good, The Bad And The Unaware

(NAPSA)—Women have a lot to learn when it comes to staying heart-healthy, including those who already have suffered a heart attack or stroke, according to a recent survey of 2,700 women, ages 50 and over.

More than half of the women surveyed (59 percent) did not know that HDL is the “good” cholesterol and that LDL is the “bad.” Eighty-one percent could not name their good cholesterol or bad cholesterol numbers. Recent studies have shown that lowering the bad cholesterol and raising the good cholesterol is the most effective way to prevent heart disease. However, millions of American women have low HDL.

“Driving down high levels of LDL cholesterol has been a major focus but we know that low HDL levels and high triglycerides also confer significant risk, particularly for women,” said Suzanne Hughes, R.N., M.S.N., of the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association (PCNA). “HDL acts like a cleaning service for the blood—carrying the bad cholesterol away from the arteries and preventing blockages.”

It is estimated that 28 million women have low HDL (less than 50 mg/dL), which puts them at greater risk for heart disease. PCNA recently launched the “What’s Missing in Cholesterol-ALL?” campaign to educate women about HDL cholesterol and triglycerides, two factors in cholesterol that are often overlooked in heart disease prevention.

Know Your Target Cholesterol Numbers

- LDL: less than 100 mg/dL
- HDL: at least 50 mg/dL for women; at least 40 mg/dL for men
- Triglycerides: less than 150 mg/dL

Remember: For HDL, the higher, the better



“Women should know that when it comes to HDL, the higher, the better,” said Nieca Goldberg, M.D., Founder, Total Heart Care, Chief of Women’s Cardiac Care at Lenox Hill Hospital and best-selling author of Women are Not Small Men: Life-Saving Strategies for Preventing and Healing Heart Disease in Women.

Lowering the bad cholesterol alone fails to prevent 60 to 70 percent of deaths related to coronary artery disease. In order to reduce risk for heart attack and stroke as much as possible, women need to manage all the risk factors, including HDL and triglycerides.

It is important to remember the difference between the good and the bad cholesterol and to discuss one’s numbers with a doctor or nurse. “We tell our patients that the ‘H’ in HDL is for Healthy and the ‘L’ in LDL is for Lethal,” Hughes said.

For more information, visit a new Web site, www.RaiseYourCholesterol.com, or call 1-877-HDL-GOAL (1-877-435-4625) for a free heart health brochure.