

## ***Giangreco, Scarano & Taylor Pediatrics***

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### **Cholesterol and Health**

Elevated levels of certain types of cholesterol in the bloodstream greatly increase the risk of heart disease and stroke in adulthood. Correction of abnormal cholesterol levels lowers the risk of heart and blood vessel disease. Cholesterol begins to deposit on the walls of blood vessels in childhood. Help your child develop good dietary and exercise habits at an early age by setting the example.

The following are effective ways to improve cholesterol levels:

- Maintain healthy body weight. Excess weight promotes harmful cholesterol levels.
- Increase consumption of fresh fruit, vegetables and fiber.
- Eat more fish and skinless poultry, less meat.
- Drink skim milk (**only** after two years of age).
- Avoid butter and ordinary margarine.
- Use liquid vegetable oils low in saturated fat - olive, sunflower, corn, safflower, soybean or rapeseed. Avoid solid cooking fats.
- Substitute low fat frozen yogurt for ice cream.
- Avoid frying foods - bake, broil or steam instead.
- Avoid foods labeled "low" or "no cholesterol" but high in saturated fat.
- Don't smoke! Smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke lead to harmful cholesterol levels, cancer, heart and lung disease.
- Regular aerobic exercise (walking, running, skating, biking, swimming, rope jumping and aerobics) improves cholesterol levels.

*Feel free to ask us for guidance on cholesterol and nutrition!*

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