

The Cholesterol- Heart Health Myth

(For more detail on this subject review the section in Practical Nutrition)

The standard recommendation by the cardiologists and most physicians are “All fats are harmful.” This statement does not take into consideration two essential facts:

- i. That there are essential fats which body cannot make on its own and must have to survive.
- ii. That the Cholesterol in the food has nothing to do with blood cholesterol (good or bad). The bad cholesterol in the body gets manufactured in the liver from the refined sugar consumed in the food. The big culprit in “cholesterol story” is the refined sugar and not the essential healthy fats. The unhealthy fats which cause disease-promoting inflammation are:
 - a) The partially hydrogenated refined oils made in the factories. These are rich in inflammatory omega 6 fatty acids. Practically all the seed oils sold in markets, even those with “Heart- Healthy Cholesterol free” labels fall in the refined category.
 - b) The invisible saturated fats – These are hidden fats present in the animal meats, and dairy products - milk-based sweets, cheese, and paneer.
 - c) Transfats – These are human-made fully hydrogenated highly inflammatory fats such as Dalda and Margarine, which get used widely by the commercial baking and packaged food industries.

It is essential to know that the fats in the body are called lipids. That is why when the fat level in the body gets ordered by the doctor, the test order is called “Blood Lipid Profile.” This test measures the levels of good and bad fats in the body, and include:

- Good Cholesterol called HDL-Cholesterol
- Bad Cholesterol called LDL-Cholesterol
- Triglycerides- Unhealthy lipid

A healthy Lipid Profile means- High level of HDL-Cholesterol, Low Levels of LDL-Cholesterol, and low-level of triglycerides.