

September 2024

BEYOND THE BENEFITS



Are You Prepped for a Disaster?

September is National Preparedness Month. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends discussing the following questions when creating an emergency plan:

- How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?
- What is my shelter plan?
- What is my evacuation plan?
- What is my household communication plan?
- Do I need to update my emergency preparedness kit?

Visit FEMA's website, [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov), to learn more about preparing for emergencies at home, at work and on the road.

Cholesterol and You

Cholesterol is a waxy substance found in your blood that your body needs to build cells; however, too much can pose a problem. Cholesterol travels through the blood on proteins called lipoproteins.

More than 40% of U.S. adults with high cholesterol don't know they have it, according to a study published in JAMA Cardiology.

There are two types of lipoproteins:

- Low-density lipoprotein (LDL), known as bad cholesterol, makes up most of your body's cholesterol. High levels of LDL cholesterol can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke.
- High-density lipoprotein (HDL), known as good cholesterol, absorbs cholesterol and carries it back to the liver to be flushed from the body.

High cholesterol usually has no symptoms, so the American Heart Association (AHA) recommends that adults age 20 or older have their cholesterol checked every four to six years. Bad cholesterol can be elevated by age, family history, certain health conditions (e.g., Type 2 diabetes and obesity) and lifestyle factors.

The only way to know whether you have high cholesterol is to check your levels. Visit your doctor for a cholesterol screening and to discuss lifestyle risks.

While you can't control risk factors, you can take steps to lower your risk for high cholesterol with the following lifestyle changes:

- **Eat a heart-healthy, balanced diet.** Saturated and trans fats can increase your cholesterol, so focus on monounsaturated fats (e.g., olive oil, nuts and avocados) and polyunsaturated fats (e.g., salmon, herring and margarine). Also, limit red meat, fried foods, processed meats and baked goods.
- **Exercise regularly.** The AHA recommends individuals get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week. Adding resistance exercises to your routine at least twice a week can further help.
- **Maintain a weight that is healthy for you.** Having excess weight or obesity can increase your risk of developing high cholesterol levels. A doctor can help determine a sustainable weight management plan.



Don't Forget About the 988 Mental Health Crisis Hotline

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (988) was launched nationwide in July 2022. Like dialing 911 for medical emergencies, people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis can call or text 988 to connect with counselors who will listen, provide support and connect them to resources. Since 988's launch, counselors have answered over 10 million calls, texts and chats. Despite the volume, a new poll revealed that only 23% of Americans are at least somewhat familiar with 988.

988 provides immediate and accessible care to anyone experiencing mental health-related distress, including thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or other emotional struggles. It's vital to continue spreading the word about 988. People can also call if they are worried about a loved one who may need immediate support.

Rice Bowl Breakfast With Fruit and Nuts

Makes: 2 Servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1/2 cup nonfat milk
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped fruit (e.g. apples, bananas, berries...)
- 2 Tbsp. chopped nuts (e.g. walnuts and almonds)

Preparations:

1. Combine cooked rice, milk and cinnamon in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 45 seconds. Stir and heat for another 45-60 seconds or until the rice mixture is heated.
2. Divide the rice mixture between two bowls. Top with fruit and nuts. Serve warm.
3. Refrigerate any leftovers within two hours.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

- Total calories: 203
- Total fat: 5 g
- Protein: 6 g
- Sodium: 31 mg
- Carbohydrate: 35 g
- Dietary fiber: 4 g
- Saturated fat: 1 g
- Total sugars: 10 g

Source: MyPlate



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