

SEPTEMBER IS SELECTED AS NATIONAL CHOLESTEROL EDUCATION AWARENESS MONTH

The Nursing division of the Livingston, NJ Health Department notes that September is Cholesterol Awareness Month and is sharing this information with its residents.

There are two kinds of cholesterol in your body. The **HDL** cholesterol is known as the good cholesterol. This type keeps the arteries clean by carrying away excess cholesterol. The other kind is known as **LDH** or bad cholesterol. This type causes the formation of a waxy substance in your arteries that restricts blood flow and can cause a heart attack or stroke. The higher this number is, the greater you're potential for heart disease.

With two sources of cholesterol to deal with, it's no wonder so many people have questions. Many of the foods we eat, even though we watch our diet, contain cholesterol. All foods of animals contain cholesterol, including shrimp, meat and bacon along with cheeses, margarine, butter, ice cream, and many other dishes that are high in saturated fats. As you eat, cholesterol is absorbed by your digestive tract and makes its way to your liver and then circulates through your body via your circulatory system.

That is one source of cholesterol, but there is another source for many people and that is your own body and inherited predisposition. Genetic studies have shown that certain people produce more cholesterol naturally, based on a family history. Your liver, along with other cells in your body, make cholesterol. Once it is produced, it can make its way into your bloodstream also.

What does this process mean to you if you have a genetic predisposition to produce more cholesterol? The two combined may give you an elevated LDH and increase the potential for heart disease. The good news is that your doctor can do a simple blood test, review your current and historical medical history and may prescribe medication to lower your numbers along with diet and exercise.

The **Livingston Health Department** is holding its annual **Fall Health Fair on Saturday, September 25 from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm at the Senior/ Community center (lower level) 204 Hillside Avenue.** Livingston residents, what a great time to get your cholesterol checked by Medical Laboratories of West Orange for a nominal fee and enjoy free screenings: hearing, podiatry, bone mineral density, chiropractic, blood pressures and more. Call us at (973) 535-7961 ex. 226, 227 or 228 for questions or information.