



## Living with high cholesterol

How to control your cholesterol with lifestyle changes and by taking medicines including Praluent® (alirocumab)



This booklet is only for adults who have been prescribed Praluent. Please also read the package leaflet that comes with your medicine or visit [www.mypraluent.co.uk](http://www.mypraluent.co.uk)



## What is this guide for?

**This guide aims to help you understand what high levels of cholesterol are and what you can do about it.**

### It explains:

- What this means for you
- How you can lower your cholesterol levels with changes to your lifestyle
- How your prescribed medicines can help and why it is important to keep taking them

## What is high cholesterol?

If you know you have high cholesterol levels but aren't sure exactly what cholesterol does and why your levels should be lower, then you're like lots of other people. It's worth getting to know more about the different types of cholesterol and the effects of too much of what is often called 'bad' cholesterol, as this can help you to be more healthy.

Cholesterol is a fatty substance mostly made within the body, but also present in some foods.

## There are two main types:



**LDL-cholesterol (LDL-C)** is the 'bad' type that carries cholesterol to the cells and tissues of the body.



**HDL-cholesterol (HDL-C)** is the 'good' type that takes cholesterol from the rest of the body to the liver where it is broken down.

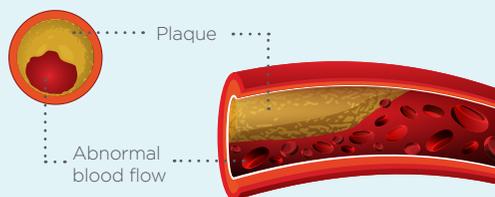
## How will cholesterol affect me?

**Cholesterol isn't always bad and some is essential to life but can sometimes lead to vascular disease.**

Cholesterol is in all the cells of our body and is important for them to work properly. Over time, a high level of bad cholesterol greatly increases the chance of heart disease. This is caused by fatty substances clogging up the inside of arteries, such as the

coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart. The higher the levels of bad cholesterol, the higher the risk of heart attacks and stroke.

### Narrowing of artery



## How will I know if I have high cholesterol levels?

Most people have no idea they have high cholesterol because it usually causes no obvious symptoms. For some, high cholesterol runs in the family. Signs of high cholesterol in these people can include lumps and bumps around the knuckles or ankles, yellowing around the eyes and eyelids, or a pale ring around the iris (the coloured part) of the eye.



- If you take medicine for high cholesterol, speak to your doctor about testing your cholesterol on a regular basis, even if you feel well and don't have any symptoms
- Your doctor will test your level of cholesterol using a blood test

## What causes high cholesterol levels?

6 out of 10 people in England have high or abnormal levels of blood cholesterol. The older we get, the more chance we have of developing high cholesterol levels and heart disease:

- Sometimes high cholesterol runs in the family. These people inherit genes from their parents that make them more likely to have too much bad cholesterol – this is referred to as familial hypercholesterolaemia
- Eating unhealthily, in particular eating foods high in saturated fats, also increases the amount of bad cholesterol in the blood (see page 4 for an explanation of what these foods are)
- Having diabetes, being overweight, not keeping active, and smoking can all increase the risk of having heart disease

All of the things above increase the chances of having heart disease in the future.

## How likely am I to get heart disease?

The answer to this question depends on lots of things. Your doctor will look at your cholesterol levels, age, family history, smoking habits and blood pressure, and discuss these with you.

Please speak to your doctor for more information.



## What can I do about it?

Although you have high cholesterol levels, you can keep yourself as healthy as possible by making changes to your lifestyle, (eating healthier food and doing more exercise) as well as taking medicines as prescribed by your doctor.

### Diet

Changing to a healthier diet can lower your cholesterol levels.

#### Wherever possible, avoid:

- ✗ Saturated fats – mostly found in meat such as pork, beef and lamb and dairy products such as cheese, cream, butter and ghee
- ✗ Trans fats found in many fried or processed foods and in pastry, pizza, biscuits and cakes

#### Instead choose healthier unsaturated fats, found in:

- ✓ Vegetable oils such as rapeseed, sunflower or olive oil, oily fish such as mackerel, salmon, sardines, pilchards or fresh tuna, and avocado, nuts and seeds

#### Eat more:

- ✓ High-fibre foods such as fruit, vegetables, whole grain cereals, breads and rice, and pulses like chick peas, kidney beans and lentils
- ✓ Foods with added plant sterols (which help lower cholesterol levels) such as some types or brands of margarines, spreads, soft cheeses, yoghurt and cholesterol-lowering mini drinks

One way to get started is by making a few realistic changes to your diet that can become part of your everyday life

- ✓ Make shopping lists swapping foods high in saturated or trans fats for healthier alternatives
- ✓ Have healthy snacks such as nuts, raw vegetables or fruit available for when you are hungry on-the-go
- ✓ Keep a food diary to track the changes you are making



### Keeping active

To stay healthy, adults should try to be active daily and do either:

- 150 minutes of moderate activity per week (30 minutes per day, 5 days a week)
- 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week (15 minutes per day, 5 days a week)
- A mix of moderate and vigorous activity each week

You don't have to do all your daily activity in one go. You can do smaller amounts more often, for example, three lots of 10 minutes throughout the day. It's often easiest to get started by including exercise in your everyday life, such as taking a brisk walk, or getting around by cycling instead of driving.

Getting friends and family involved is a good way to stay motivated and means you don't have to find 'extra' time to exercise – a game of football, doing some gardening or swimming with your friends, children or grandchildren is a fun way to exercise.

For additional information, visit the NHS Live Well website at: [www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well)

### Smoking

If you smoke, giving up will provide many health benefits:

Within one year of quitting smoking, you can halve your risk of having a heart attack.

For additional support and information, visit the NHS Smoke Free website at: [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)

### Taking medicines

- Take your cholesterol-lowering medicines as recommended by your doctor
- Don't stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor first
- Tell your doctor if your medicine causes you any problems, or side-effects

Remember that not every medicine works the same in every patient, which may mean you and your doctor have to change how much you are taking or try more than one type of medicine to get it right for you.

Making the healthy changes to your lifestyle mentioned above and taking your medicine as prescribed will give you a chance of reducing bad cholesterol levels.

For further support in making long-term changes, please refer to the websites and helplines listed on the back of this booklet.

## What is Praluent and why do I need to keep using it?

### Why have I been prescribed Praluent?

- Praluent works by helping to remove LDL-C from the body. Praluent can be used on its own, or together with other medicines.
- Even if you don't feel any different, Praluent will be working to help lower your levels of bad cholesterol. It is important to keep using Praluent as prescribed by your doctor even if you feel well.
- Praluent is given as an injection just under the skin, by a pen already filled with the medicine.

### The future – keeping your cholesterol levels healthy

It's worth taking the time to understand what having high levels of bad cholesterol means. You can then make plans for lowering your high cholesterol to healthier levels. This can help you reduce your risk of developing heart disease.

By working together with your doctor, and using the other ways to help as listed in this booklet (leaflets, websites and helplines), you can give yourself a good chance of keeping your cholesterol levels healthy.



For further information about Praluent and how to inject it, managing cholesterol levels and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), please visit our dedicated website: [www.mypraluent.co.uk](http://www.mypraluent.co.uk)

**MyPraluent**  
FOR PATIENTS



## Patient Resources

### Useful links

**British Heart Foundation:**  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)  
Helpline: 0300 330 3311

**Heart UK – The Cholesterol Charity:** [www.heartuk.org.uk](http://www.heartuk.org.uk)  
Helpline: 0345 450 5988

**NHS Live Well:**  
[www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well)  
[www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Fitness](http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Fitness)

**NHS Smoke Free:**  
[www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)

### Helpful words

#### Heart disease

Any disorder that affects the heart, such as heart attack or angina.

#### Heart attack

An emergency caused when the blood supply to the heart becomes blocked by a blood clot and part of the heart doesn't get any oxygen. A heart attack can be caused by fatty substances from untreated high cholesterol levels which block arteries taking blood to the heart.

#### Stroke

A condition caused when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off. A stroke can be caused by fatty substances from untreated high cholesterol levels which block arteries taking blood to the brain.

### Cholesterol

A fatty substance mainly made in the body by the liver. Cholesterol plays an important role in making sure that every cell in the body works as it should. However, too much cholesterol in the blood may mean you are more likely to get heart disease.

#### High cholesterol levels

When you have too much cholesterol in your blood. Having a high cholesterol level means that you are more likely to get other medical conditions such as heart disease and stroke.

#### Statins

Commonly prescribed medicines used to treat high levels of cholesterol.

#### LDL-cholesterol

Also called 'bad' cholesterol. Cholesterol is carried by low-density lipoproteins (LDLs) from your liver to the cells of your body. If the levels of bad cholesterol are too high, it can build up in your arteries, putting you at risk of heart disease.

#### HDL-cholesterol

Also called 'good' cholesterol. Cholesterol carried by high-density lipoproteins (HDLs) is returned to the liver, preventing it from building up in your arteries.

# Additional information

Further information on Praluent and on managing high levels of cholesterol can be found at: [www.mypraluent.co.uk](http://www.mypraluent.co.uk). This website has been developed and funded by Sanofi.

For further information on Praluent please contact the Sanofi Medical Information Department on 0800 035 2525, by email to [uk-medicalinformation@sanofi.com](mailto:uk-medicalinformation@sanofi.com) or visit [www.mypraluent.co.uk](http://www.mypraluent.co.uk).

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet.

You can help by reporting any side effects you may get via the Yellow Card Scheme at [www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk) or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store.

Side effects may also be reported directly to the Sanofi Drug Safety Department on 0800 090 2314 or by email to [uk-drugsafety@sanofi.com](mailto:uk-drugsafety@sanofi.com).

## How do I use the QR Code?

### Using your smartphone camera:

Most new smartphones can recognise a QR code directly from the camera. Open your camera and using the rear facing camera, position your phone so the QR code is stable within in the digital viewfinder. Once the QR code is recognised, a notification will appear with the website address. Click this to be taken to the MyPraluent website.

### Using a QR code reader

Download a QR code reader from Google Play or Apple App Store. Launch your QR code reader and position your phone so the QR code is stable within in the digital viewfinder. Once the QR code is recognised, the app will take you directly to the MyPraluent website.

**MyPraluent**  
FOR PATIENTS

[www.mypraluent.co.uk](http://www.mypraluent.co.uk)



Sanofi is committed to providing resources to better understand cholesterol management and to research the unmet needs of patients with poorly controlled LDL-C

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