

What is

# Cholesterol

## The Basics

### What It Is

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance found in your blood. It is produced by your liver and is also present in certain foods that you eat.

### What It Does

Cholesterol is important and necessary for your body. **It plays a role in helping your body make hormones, vitamin D, cell membranes, and digest fatty foods.** However, when you have too much cholesterol, it can build up in your arteries. This buildup, known as plaque, can contribute to heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes.

### How You'll Know

High cholesterol typically doesn't present symptoms. If you haven't had your blood work done recently, you may not know your current levels. You can request a lipid panel during your next doctor's visit. Alternatively, if your next appointment is far into the future and you're eager for immediate results, consider visiting a lab such as Labcorp or Quest Diagnostics.