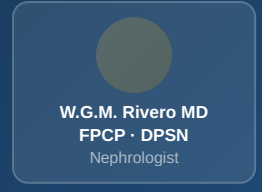


Cholesterol: The Silent Risk in Filipinos

Why it matters, what to eat, and how to **protect your heart**



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<200
mg/dL Total Cholesterol Goal

<100
mg/dL LDL Target (most patients)

≥60
mg/dL HDL Goal (protective)

1 Why Lower Your Cholesterol?

Prevents Artery Plaque
Less heart attack risk

Protects the Brain
Lowers stroke risk

Protects the Heart
Less chest pain

Slows CKD Damage
Kidneys need clean vessels

May Reduce Meds
Diet can lower statin dose

More Energy
Better blood flow

2 LDL vs HDL — Know the Difference

LDL ↑

"BAD" — Lower is Better

- Builds plaque in arteries
- Raised by sat fat & trans fat
- Target: <100 mg/dL
- High risk: <55–70 mg/dL

VS

HDL ↑

"GOOD" — Higher is Better

- Removes cholesterol from vessels
- Raised by exercise & omega-3
- Target: ≥60 mg/dL
- <40 M / <50 F = high risk

△ Triglycerides (TG) — The Hidden Danger in Filipino Diets

Normal: <150 mg/dL. Raised mainly by **white rice, softdrinks, sugary drinks, alcohol, and instant noodles** — the staples of many Filipino diets. High TG raises cardiovascular risk even when LDL looks "normal."

3 Top Cholesterol Threats in Filipino Cooking

Coconut Oil & Gata
92% Saturated Fat

Pork Skin / Lard / Chicharon
Highest LDL-raisers

Processed Meats
Spam, Hotdog, CDO, Tocino

Large White Rice Portions
Biggest TG-raiser

Softdrinks & Juice Drinks
35–40g sugar → TG spike

Beer & Gin
Alcohol raises TG fast

Infographic Overview — continued

How Fats Move Your Lipids · Target Numbers · Kitchen Swaps

4 How Different Fats Move Your Lipid Panel

| Fat Type | LDL | HDL | TG | Common Philippine Sources |
|------------------------|-----|-----|----|--|
| Saturated Fat (SFA) | ↑↑ | — | — | Coconut oil (VCO, Minola), lard, butter, gata, chicharon, lechon, fatty pork, full-fat cheese |
| Trans Fat (TFA) worst | ↑↑ | ↓↓ | — | Partially hydrogenated margarine, commercial fried food — avoid entirely |
| Monounsaturated (MUFA) | ↓ | — | — | Canola oil, olive oil, avocado, pili nuts, cashews, almonds |
| Omega-3 PUFA (EPA/DHA) | — | ↑ | ↓↓ | Sardinas (lata), galunggong, bangus, salmon — aim for 2 servings/week |
| Soluble Fiber | ↓ | — | — | Oatmeal, monggo, okra, kamote — 5–10 g/day lowers LDL ~5–11 mg/dL |
| Sugar & Refined Carbs | — | ↓ | ↑↑ | White rice (large portions), softdrinks, instant noodles, white bread — biggest TG driver in Filipino diet |
| Alcohol | — | — | ↑↑ | Beer, gin, lambanog — even moderate use raises TG; stopping often drops TG 30–50% in weeks |

5 Your Lipid Target Numbers

Know Your Numbers

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Cholesterol <200 mg/dL | LDL-C (bad) <100 mg/dL |
| HDL-C (good) ≥60 mg/dL | Triglycerides <150 mg/dL |
| Non-HDL-C <130 mg/dL | TG/HDL Ratio <3.5 ratio |

High-risk patients (CKD, diabetes, prior heart attack): LDL target may be <55–70 mg/dL — ask your doctor

6 Simple Kitchen Swaps That Work

| REMOVE | → | USE INSTEAD |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Coconut oil / lard | → | Canola oil or olive oil |
| Pork belly (liempo) | → | Chicken breast or pork loin (kasim) |
| Lechon / chicharon snack | → | 30g pili nuts or fresh fruit |
| Gata-heavy laing / Bicol express | → | Tinola or pinakbet (canola oil) |
| White rice (3+ cups/day) | → | Half brown rice + smaller portions |
| 3-in-1 coffee / softdrinks | → | Black barako coffee / salabat / water |
| Spam / hotdog / processed meat | → | Sardinas (lata) or fresh tilapia |
| Leche flan / halo-halo | → | Fresh papaya or boiled saba banana |

HOW TO READ PAGES 3–5:

■ **AVOID** = high cardiovascular risk

■ **LIMIT** = occasional, small portion

■ **GOOD** = eat freely, heart-healthy

H High M Moderate L Low

SF =Saturated Fat **SUG** =Sugar/Refined Carbs (TG driver) **CHOL** =Dietary Cholesterol

| Food Item (Filipino Name) | Typical Serving | SF | SUG | CHOL | Rating | Key Note |
|---|-----------------|----|-----|------|--------|--|
| A · LUTONG-BAHAY — PORK & BEEF DISHES | | | | | | |
| Lechon baboy (whole roasted pig) | 1 slice 100g | H | L | H | AVOID | Skin = pure saturated fat; organ stuffing raises dietary cholesterol further |
| Crispy pata (deep-fried pork knuckle) | 1 piece 150g | H | L | H | AVOID | Pork skin + knuckle = very high saturated fat and dietary cholesterol |
| Chicharon bulaklak (pork mesentery, fried) | 50 g | H | L | H | AVOID | Organ membrane deep-fried in lard; among the highest sat-fat snacks in Filipino cuisine |
| Dinuguan (pork blood stew) | 1 cup | H | L | H | AVOID | Pork blood + innards in pork fat broth; very high in cholesterol and sat fat |
| Laing (taro leaves in coconut cream) | 1 cup | H | L | L | AVOID | Coconut cream = 15–25 g saturated fat per serving; reduce to minimal light gata |
| Bicol express (pork + gata + chili) | 1 cup | H | L | M | AVOID | Double fat load: pork belly + thick coconut cream; use light gata + pork loin to modify |
| Kare-kare + bagoong (peanut oxtail stew) | 1 bowl | H | M | M | AVOID | Peanut sauce + oxtail fat; bagoong adds very high sodium — also risky for CKD |
| Longganisa Vigan / sweet (cured fatty pork) | 2 links 80g | H | M | M | AVOID | High sat fat + high sodium + sugar; nitrite preservatives compound cardiovascular risk |
| Paksiw na lechon / lechon sauce | 1 cup | H | M | H | AVOID | Lechon fat recooked in liver-rich sauce; double cholesterol hit — liver is very high in CHOL |
| Adobo (pork belly, with skin) | 1 cup | H | L | M | LIMIT | Use pork loin instead of belly; remove skin; drain fat before serving to reduce sat fat ~40% |
| Bulalo (bone marrow beef soup) | 1 bowl | H | L | H | LIMIT | Bone marrow = very high cholesterol; eat lean meat only; discard fatty broth and marrow |
| Sinigang na baboy (pork) | 1 bowl | M | L | M | LIMIT | Use lean pork (kasim); sinigang na isda is a far better swap with more omega-3 |
| Menudo / Afritada / Caldereta (pork) | 1 cup | M | M | M | LIMIT | Use lean pork; liver spread in caldereta adds dietary cholesterol — reduce amount or omit |
| Tocino (sweet-cured pork belly) | 2 slices 80g | H | M | M | LIMIT | High sat fat + added sugar; prefer homemade lean pork versions; occasional treat only |
| Arroz caldo (pork or chicken rice porridge) | 1 bowl | L | H | L | LIMIT | Low fat but high refined carbs (TG risk); use brown rice; top with tokwa instead of pork |
| Tinola (chicken + malunggay / sayote) | 1 bowl | L | L | L | GOOD | Remove skin; eat chicken + vegetables; excellent everyday meal — best home-cooked option |
| Chicken adobo sa puti (no skin, no liver) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Lean chicken breast adobo; vinegar-based cooking preserves flavor without extra fat |
| Nilagang manok (boiled chicken) | 1 bowl | L | L | L | GOOD | Excellent — remove skin; eat meat and vegetables; discard broth to reduce sodium |
| B · ISDA AT PAGKAIN SA DAGAT — FISH & SEAFOOD | | | | | | |
| Crispy fried bangus (whole, with skin) | 1 small | M | L | M | AVOID | Frying in coconut oil or lard adds large sat fat load; eat grilled or steamed instead |
| Sugpo / hipon (shrimp) | 8 pcs medium | L | L | H | LIMIT | Low sat fat but high dietary cholesterol (~150mg/serving); limit to 1–2x/week |
| Pusit (squid, grilled or adobo) | 1 cup | L | L | M | LIMIT | Moderate dietary cholesterol; avoid deep-fried tempura version |
| Talaba (oysters, raw or grilled) | 6 pieces | L | L | M | LIMIT | Rich in zinc and omega-3; moderate cholesterol; avoid fried versions |
| Sinigang na bangus / tilapia / labahita | 1 bowl | L | L | L | GOOD | Best Filipino soup — fish + vegetables + tamarind; limit broth intake for sodium |
| Inihaw na bangus (grilled milkfish, no skin) | 1 medium | L | L | L | GOOD | Excellent omega-3 source; remove skin to cut sat fat further |
| Inihaw na galunggong (round scad, grilled) | 2–3 pieces | L | L | L | GOOD | Best budget omega-3 fish in PH markets; grill or steam; avoid frying in coconut oil |
| Sardinas sa kamatis (canned, tomato sauce) | 1 can | L | L | L | GOOD | Affordable EPA/DHA omega-3; choose tomato sauce or water — NOT oil-packed |
| Tilapia (steamed or grilled) | 1 medium | L | L | L | GOOD | Lean white fish; mild omega-3; very affordable; cook without coconut oil |
| Tuyo (dried herring, grilled not fried) | 2 pieces | L | L | L | GOOD | Good omega-3; very high sodium — limit to 1–2x/week; do NOT fry in extra oil |
| C · GULAY AT LEGUMES — VEGETABLES & LEGUMES · EAT FREELY | | | | | | |
| Monggo guisado (mung bean stew) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Best soluble fiber staple; LDL-lowering; use canola oil, not lard, for sautéing |
| Pinakbet (no bagoong, canola oil) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Okra, ampalaya, eggplant — fiber-rich, LDL-lowering; skip the bagoong and lard |
| Ginisang kangkong (sautéed water spinach) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Use canola oil + garlic; add tokwa for protein; affordable heart-healthy staple |
| Ampalaya con huevo (bitter melon + egg) | 1 cup | L | L | M | GOOD | Ampalaya lowers LDL and blood sugar; egg adds moderate dietary cholesterol — limit to 1 egg |
| Lumpiang sariwa (fresh spring rolls) | 2 rolls | L | L | L | GOOD | Excellent — vegetables + tokwa wrapped in rice paper; avoid the fried lumpia version |
| Okra (steamed or in sinigang) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Highest soluble fiber vegetable in PH; viscous mucilage binds cholesterol in the gut |

| Food Item (Filipino Name / Brand) | Typical Serving | SF | SUG | CHOL | Rating | Key Note |
|---|-----------------|----|-----|------|--------|---|
| E · KAKANIN AT MATAMIS — FILIPINO SWEETS & DESSERTS | | | | | | |
| Leche flan | 1 slice 100g | H | H | H | AVOID | Triple threat: egg yolks (cholesterol) + condensed milk (sat fat + sugar) — all three cells red |
| Biko / sinukmani (glutinous rice + gata) | 1 piece | H | H | L | AVOID | Coconut cream + refined glutinous rice + sugar = high sat fat AND high TG together |
| Maja blanca (coconut milk pudding) | 1 square | H | H | L | AVOID | Thick coconut cream + condensed milk + cornstarch; high sat fat and sugar |
| Polvoron (lard shortbread) | 2 pieces | H | H | M | AVOID | Traditionally made with lard + condensed milk; check label for vegetable shortening versions |
| Ensaymada (butter + cream cheese topping) | 1 large | H | M | M | AVOID | Butter filling + cream cheese topping = high sat fat; check for partially hydrogenated margarine |
| Halo-halo (full serving) | 1 large glass | H | H | M | AVOID | Coconut cream + condensed milk + ube ice cream + multiple sugary toppings |
| Yema (egg yolk + condensed milk candy) | 4 pieces | H | H | H | AVOID | Pure egg yolk + condensed milk = concentrated cholesterol and saturated fat in one candy |
| Bibingka (plain, no extra butter topping) | 1 medium | M | M | M | LIMIT | Rice flour + egg + coconut milk; moderate in all; avoid extra butter topping |
| Champorado (chocolate rice porridge) | 1 bowl | L | H | L | LIMIT | High refined carb + sugar → raises TG; skip condensed milk topping; use low-fat milk |
| Puto (plain, steamed rice cake) | 3 pieces | L | M | L | LIMIT | Lower fat than most kakanin; refined rice starch raises TG if eaten in large amounts |
| Fresh papaya, melon, watermelon | 1 cup cubed | L | L | L | GOOD | High fiber; natural sweetness without TG spike; best dessert choice after any meal |
| Boiled saba banana (no sugar) | 2 pieces | L | L | L | GOOD | Resistant starch + fiber; healthy snack; do NOT fry or add sugar |
| F · FAST FOOD — JOLLIBEE · MANG INASAL · KFC · MCDONALD'S · CHOWKING | | | | | | |
| Jollibee Chickenjoy (with skin + gravy) | 1 piece | H | M | H | AVOID | Skin + batter = high sat fat; gravy adds sodium + starch thickeners + phosphate additives |
| KFC Original Recipe (with skin) | 1 piece | H | L | H | AVOID | 11-herb batter seals high sat fat in; skin contains most of the phosphate additives |
| Jolly Hotdog Classic (with cheese) | 1 sandwich | H | M | M | AVOID | Hotdog = high sat fat + sodium phosphate; cheese adds more sat fat |
| Jollibee Jolly Spaghetti | 1 regular | M | H | M | AVOID | Sweet banana ketchup sauce = high sugar → TG↑; hotdog slices add sat fat |
| McD McSpicy / McCrispy (with skin) | 1 sandwich | H | M | H | AVOID | High sat fat from breading + palm oil frying; remove breading and skin to reduce impact |
| Burger King Whopper / McD Big Mac | 1 burger | H | M | H | AVOID | Double beef patty + cheese + mayo = ~20g sat fat per burger; worst fast food choice |
| Chowking Lauriat (fried chicken + pork) | 1 set | H | M | H | AVOID | Fried protein + sweet sauce + white rice combo = high sat fat + high TG |
| Mang Inasal Liempo (grilled pork belly) | 1 slab | H | L | M | AVOID | Even grilled, pork belly fat remains; avoid the marinade-basted skin portions |
| Jollibee Chickenjoy (skin removed, no gravy) | 1 piece | M | L | M | LIMIT | Removing skin cuts sat fat by ~40%; no gravy reduces sodium and thickeners significantly |
| Mang Inasal Paa (thigh, with skin) | 1 piece | M | L | M | LIMIT | Grilled > fried; remove skin; use vinegar dip instead of chicken oil |
| McDo Filet-O-Fish | 1 sandwich | M | M | M | LIMIT | Better than beef/chicken options; tartar sauce adds sat fat — ask for less sauce |
| Chowking Congee / Arroz caldo | 1 bowl | L | H | L | LIMIT | Low fat but refined carb-heavy → TG↑; filling; avoid extra toppings |
| Mang Inasal Pecho (breast, no skin, vinegar dip) | 1 piece | L | L | L | GOOD | Best fast food order in PH; grilled chicken breast + vinegar dip; skip chicken oil and unlimited rice |
| Chowking Tofu Sisig | 1 serving | L | L | L | GOOD | Plant protein; low sat fat and cholesterol; watch sodium in sauce |
| McDo side corn / side salad (no dressing) | 1 side | L | L | L | GOOD | Best side dish choices; request no dressing or use lemon wedge instead |
| G · GROCERY & PACKAGED FOODS — LATA · NAKA-PACK · SUPERMARKET | | | | | | |
| Spam Original (Hormel) | 2 slices 57g | H | L | M | AVOID | 10g sat fat per serving + very high sodium; most popular processed meat in PH |
| Purefoods / CDO Hotdog (regular) | 2 pieces | H | L | M | AVOID | High sat fat + sodium phosphate additives (100% absorbed); check label for "phosphate" |
| Argentina / CDO Corned Beef | ½ can | H | L | M | AVOID | High sat fat + very high sodium; carrageenan filler in lower-grade brands |
| Ligo / CDO Vienna Sausage | 1 can | H | L | M | AVOID | Processed pork + high sodium + phosphate preservatives; no nutritional benefit |
| Coconut cream / gata (Kara, Aroy-D) | ½ cup | H | L | L | AVOID | ~20g sat fat per ½ cup; most common hidden cholesterol-raiser in Filipino home cooking |
| Condensed milk (Alaska, Magnolia, Nestlé) | 2 tbsp | M | H | M | AVOID | Very high sugar + sat fat; used in coffee, kakanin, and leche flan |
| Lucky Me Instant Pancit Canton / cup noodles | 1 pack | M | H | L | AVOID | Palm-oil fried noodles + very high sodium + MSG; regular use raises TG and LDL |

| Food Item (Filipino Name / Brand) | Typical Serving | SF | SUG | CHOL | Rating | Key Note |
|--|-----------------|----|-----|------|--------|--|
| H · COOKING OILS & FATS — MANTIKA AT TABA | | | | | | |
| Coconut oil (VCO, Minola, Natura) | 1 tbsp | H | L | L | AVOID | 92% saturated fat — highest of any oil; consistent LDL-raiser in clinical trials |
| Lard / baboy fat (mantika ng baboy) | 1 tbsp | H | L | L | AVOID | Still standard in many Filipino kitchens and carinderia; replace entirely with canola oil |
| Palm oil / palm shortening | 1 tbsp | H | L | L | AVOID | 50% sat fat; used in commercial frying, instant noodles, and many biscuit brands |
| Partially hydrogenated margarine (trans fat) | 1 tbsp | H | L | L | AVOID | Raises LDL AND lowers HDL simultaneously — worst fat for the heart; check label for "hydrogenated" |
| Butter (Anchor, Gold Ribbon) | 1 tbsp | H | L | L | LIMIT | 7g sat fat per tbsp; use sparingly; replace with canola oil for cooking |
| Canola oil (Baguio Gold, Mazola) | 1 tbsp | L | L | L | GOOD | Best for high-heat sautéing and frying; high MUFA, very low SFA; neutral taste |
| Extra virgin olive oil | 1 tbsp | L | L | L | GOOD | Best for dressings and low-heat cooking; polyphenols add anti-inflammatory benefit |
| I · INUMIN — DRINKS & BEVERAGES | | | | | | |
| Softdrinks (Coke, Sprite, Pepsi, Royal) | 1 can 330mL | L | H | L | AVOID | 35–40g sugar per can → TG↑↑; habitual intake is one of the fastest ways to raise triglycerides |
| Red Horse / San Miguel Beer | 1 bottle 330mL | L | H | L | AVOID | Alcohol directly raises TG; stopping beer often drops TG 30–50% within weeks |
| Ginebra gin / Tanduay rum | 1 shot + mixer | L | H | L | AVOID | Alcohol metabolism generates fat; spirits + juice/cola = compounded TG risk |
| 3-in-1 coffee (Nescafe, Great Taste) | 1 sachet | L | H | L | AVOID | Non-dairy creamer (palm oil) + sugar = high TG driver; switch to black brewed coffee |
| Sago't gulaman / buko pandan (sweetened) | 1 large glass | L | H | L | AVOID | Arnibal (sugar syrup) + coconut cream = high sugar + sat fat; beloved but very high TG |
| Powdered juice drinks (Tang, 8 O'Clock, Zesto) | 1 glass | L | H | L | AVOID | Almost pure sugar + artificial flavoring; no nutritional value; major TG raiser in Filipino diet |
| Milo / Ovaltine (hot or iced) | 1 cup | L | M | L | LIMIT | Moderate sugar; use less powder than directed; prepare with skim or low-fat milk |
| Fresh buko (coconut) juice, no sugar added | 1 coconut | L | M | L | LIMIT | Natural sugars; refreshing; acceptable if not diabetic; avoid bottled sweetened versions |
| Black coffee (barako, brewed, no sugar) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Paper-filtered is best; unfiltered (French press, boiled barako) may raise LDL slightly |
| Salabat (fresh ginger tea, no sugar) | 1 cup | L | L | L | GOOD | Anti-inflammatory; traditional Filipino tea; small LDL-lowering effect; ideal post-meal drink |
| Unsweetened calamansi juice (fresh) | 1 glass | L | L | L | GOOD | Vitamin C; very low sugar if no arnibal added; excellent with grilled fish |
| Plain water / mineral water | Any amount | L | L | L | GOOD | Best beverage; aim for 6–8 glasses/day; add calamansi slices for flavor |

Lifestyle Changes That Move Your Lipid Panel

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Aerobic Exercise</p> <p>↑ HDL 3–9% · ↓ TG 10–20%</p> <p>150 min/week brisk walking, swimming, or cycling. Shifts LDL particles to larger, less dangerous type.</p> | <p>Weight Loss (5–10%)</p> <p>↓ TG 20–30% · ↑ HDL 5–8%</p> <p>Even partial weight loss measurably improves all lipid values — every kilogram matters.</p> | <p>Reduce White Rice</p> <p>↓ TG fast · ↓ TG/HDL ratio</p> <p>Liver converts excess refined carbs to VLDL fat. Smaller portions + brown rice.</p> |
| <p>Quit Smoking</p> <p>↑ HDL within weeks</p> <p>Smoking lowers HDL 4–6 mg/dL. Quitting is the single most impactful cardiovascular intervention.</p> | <p>Stop Alcohol</p> <p>↓ TG 30–50% in weeks</p> <p>If TG is elevated, stopping Red Horse and gin is often faster than any dietary change.</p> | <p>Sleep 7–8 Hours</p> <p>Modest lipid benefit</p> <p>Poor sleep raises LDL and TG independently. Stress raises cortisol → more VLDL secretion.</p> |

Sample Heart-Healthy Filipino Day






- Breakfast** Quaker oatmeal + sliced banana + 1 boiled egg (or tokwa scramble) + black barako coffee (never 3-in-1)
- Lunch** ½ cup brown rice + monggo guisado with malunggay + inihaw na galunggong + tomato-onion ensalada + unsweetened calamansi juice
- Snack** 30g pili nuts or cashews + fresh papaya or melon slices (eat the whole fruit — NOT juice)
- Dinner** Sardines in tomato sauce (lata) + steamed kangkong with garlic in canola oil + small brown rice portion + salabat

Your Lipid Panel: What It Means




Know your numbers — the targets, borderline ranges, and risk categories at a glance.

YOUR LIPID PANEL: WHAT IT MEANS





— Know Your Numbers. Protect Your Heart. —

| TEST | WHAT IT IS | DESIRABLE (Optimal) | BORDERLINE | HIGH (Needs Attention) |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
|  Total Cholesterol | The total amount of cholesterol in your blood. | < 200 mg/dL | 200 – 239 mg/dL | ≥ 240 mg/dL |
|  LDL Cholesterol ("Bad" Cholesterol) | Carries cholesterol to your cells. High levels can build up in artery walls. | < 100 mg/dL (optimal) | 100 – 129 mg/dL (near optimal) | ≥ 130 mg/dL (high) |
|  HDL Cholesterol ("Good" Cholesterol) | Helps remove cholesterol from your arteries and carries it back to the liver. | ≥ 60 mg/dL (higher is better) | 40 – 59 mg/dL | < 40 mg/dL (low) |
|  Triglycerides | A type of fat (not cholesterol) used for energy. High levels raise heart risk. | < 150 mg/dL | 150 – 199 mg/dL | ≥ 200 mg/dL |
|  Non-HDL Cholesterol | Total cholesterol minus HDL. Includes all the "bad" particles. | < 130 mg/dL | 130 – 159 mg/dL | ≥ 160 mg/dL |





WHY THESE NUMBERS MATTER

-  High LDL and Non-HDL can lead to plaque buildup (atherosclerosis) and increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.
-  High HDL helps protect your heart.
-  High Triglycerides are linked to fatty liver, diabetes, and heart disease.


RISK CATEGORIES (By LDL-C)

-  **LOW RISK** < 100 mg/dL
-  **MODERATE RISK** 100 – 129 mg/dL
-  **HIGH RISK** 130 – 159 mg/dL
-  **VERY HIGH RISK** ≥ 160 mg/dL

FASTING & TESTING TIPS

-  Fast 9–12 hours before the test (water is okay).
-  Tell your doctor about medications and supplements.
-  Regular exercise, healthy food, and weight control improve your numbers.
-  Check your lipid panel every 6–12 months (or as advised by your doctor).

REMEMBER

 It's not just about one number. Your overall risk depends on your lipid panel, health conditions, family history, and lifestyle.

Always discuss your results with your doctor to understand your personal risk and treatment goals.

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Discuss your own results with your physician — your personal LDL target depends on your overall cardiovascular and kidney risk.

Filipino Foods: Choices That Protect Your Heart

Small changes in everyday meals — what to limit, what to embrace, and how to cook smarter.

FILIPINO FOODS: CHOICES THAT PROTECT YOUR HEART

• Small changes in your everyday meals can lead to a healthier heart. •

| ❌ FOODS TO LIMIT May raise LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and heart disease risk | ✅ FOODS TO EMBRACE Heart-healthy choices that support your well-being | HEART-HEALTHY COOKING TIPS |
|---|--|---|
|  <p>DEEP-FRIED FOODS Lechon, chicharon, crispy bagnet, fried chicken, lumpia. ▲ High in saturated fat and calories.</p> |  <p>FISH & SEAFOOD Bangus, tilapia, tuna, sardines, salmon, shrimp, tahong. ♥ Rich in omega-3 fatty acids; eat fish 2-3 times a week.</p> |  <p>Choose grilled, baked, steamed, boiled, or sautéed dishes.</p> |
|  <p>CREAMY & HIGH-FAT DISHES Carbonara, creamy pasta, mayonnaise-based salads, rich sauces. ▲ High in saturated fat.</p> |  <p>VEGETABLES Ampalaya, pechay, kangkong, sitaw, okra, talong, sayote, squash. ♥ High in fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants.</p> |  <p>Use healthy oils in moderation: olive oil, canola oil, or avocado oil.</p> |
|  <p>PROCESSED MEATS Longganisa, tocino, ham, hotdogs, corned beef. ▲ High in saturated fat, sodium, and preservatives.</p> |  <p>WHOLE GRAINS Brown rice, red rice, whole grain bread, oats, quinoa. ♥ Provide fiber and long-lasting energy.</p> |  <p>Flavor your food with garlic, onions, ginger, calamansi, herbs, and spices instead of salt and sauces.</p> |
|  <p>VISIBLE ANIMAL FATS Mantika, chicken skin, fatty cuts of meat. ▲ High in saturated fat.</p> |  <p>PLANT-BASED PROTEINS Mungo, lentils, chickpeas, taho, tokwa, tempeh. ♥ Low in saturated fat, high in fiber and nutrients.</p> |  <p>Limit salt, soy sauce, fish sauce, and seasoning mixes.</p> |
|  <p>SUGARY TREATS & DRINKS Cakes, pastries, leche flan, sweetened beverages, milk tea. ▲ Can raise triglycerides and promote weight gain.</p> |  <p>FRUITS Bayabas, papaya, mango, saging na saba, kahel, berries. ♥ High in fiber, vitamins, and natural antioxidants.</p> |  <p>Stay hydrated and limit sweetened drinks and alcohol.</p> |
| <p>ENJOY IN MODERATION You don't have to give these up completely. Portion control and less frequent indulgence are key.</p> | | |
| <p>BALANCE. VARIETY. PORTION CONTROL. MOVEMENT. These habits, together with regular exercise, are the best recipe for a healthy heart.</p> | | |

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
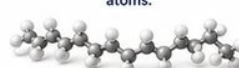


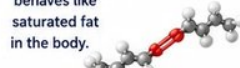

















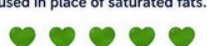


Balance, variety, portion control, and movement — together with regular exercise, these habits are the best recipe for a healthy heart.

Dietary Fats: The Good, the Bad, and the Worst





How saturated, unsaturated, and trans fats each affect your cholesterol.

UNDERSTANDING DIETARY FATS


Not all fats are the same. Choose wisely for a healthy heart.

| | SATURATED FATS (Mostly Solid at Room Temp) | MONOUNSATURATED FATS (Mostly Liquid at Room Temp) | POLYUNSATURATED FATS (Always Liquid at Room Temp) | TRANS FATS (Artificial) |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| WHAT THEY ARE  | No double bonds between carbon atoms.  | One double bond in the fat molecule.  | Two or more double bonds in the fat molecule.  | Created through hydrogenation; behaves like saturated fat in the body.  |
| COMMON FOOD SOURCES  |  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatty cuts of meat • Butter, lard, ghee • Full-fat dairy (cheese, whole milk) • Coconut oil, palm oil |  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olive oil, canola oil • Avocado • Nuts (almonds, cashews, peanuts) • Peanut oil |  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunflower, corn, soybean oil • Fish (salmon, tuna, sardines) • Walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds • Soybeans |  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially hydrogenated oils • Margarine, shortening • Packaged baked goods • Fried fast foods, snacks |
| EFFECT ON LDL ("BAD") CHOLESTEROL  |  Raises LDL (less healthy) |  Lowers LDL (heart healthy) |  Lowers LDL (heart healthy) |  Raises LDL (very harmful) |
| EFFECT ON HDL ("GOOD") CHOLESTEROL  |  Lowers HDL (less healthy) |  May increase HDL (heart healthy) |  May increase HDL (heart healthy) |  Lowers HDL (very harmful) |
| IMPACT ON HEART HEALTH  | In excess, increases risk of heart disease and stroke.  | Protective for the heart when used in place of saturated fats.  | Protective for the heart. Essential fats your body needs.  | Increases risk of heart disease, stroke, and inflammation.  |


KEY TAKEAWAY

-  Limit saturated fats.
-  Choose monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.
-  Avoid trans fats completely.
-  Focus on whole, minimally processed foods.


QUICK GUIDE: HEALTHIER CHOICES




Use olive oil or canola oil for cooking.




Eat fish 2-3 times a week.



Snack on nuts, seeds, and legumes.



Read labels. Avoid "partially hydrogenated oils".

 Healthy fats, in the right amount, support your heart, brain, and overall well-being.
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Replace saturated and trans fats with unsaturated fats (fish, nuts, olive/canola oil) to lower LDL without lowering protective HDL.

A Heart-Healthy Filipino Day

A sample full day of heart- and kidney-friendly Filipino meals.

A HEART-HEALTHY FILIPINO DAY

Delicious. Balanced. Heart-Protective.

A sample day of Filipino meals that support healthy cholesterol and a strong heart.

| | BREAKFAST Start your day right | LUNCH Fuel your body | DINNER Light, satisfying | SNACKS Smart choices | EVERYDAY HEART HABITS |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
| MEAL IDEAS | Oatmeal with Fruits & Nuts | Grilled Bangus with Brown Rice & Ginisang Gulay | Pinakbet with Lean Chicken | Fresh Fruits & Nuts | <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> Fill half your plate with vegetables at every meal. </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> Choose fish more often. Aim for 2–3 times a week. </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> Use healthy oils like olive, canola, or avocado oil in moderation. </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> Move daily. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity. </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> Manage stress, sleep well, and stay hydrated. </div> |
| WHAT'S IN IT | Oats, banana, papaya, chia seeds, and a few walnuts | Bangus (milkfish), brown rice, ginisang ampalaya, talong, and kamatis | Kalabasa, sitaw, okra, talong, ampalaya, with lean chicken | Mango, saba banana, and a small handful of unsalted nuts | |
| HEART BENEFITS | Oats and nuts help lower LDL cholesterol. Fiber keeps you full longer and supports healthy blood sugar. | Bangus is rich in omega-3s that help lower triglycerides and reduce inflammation. Vegetables provide fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants. | High in fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants. Low in saturated fat and cholesterol. | Provides natural energy, fiber, potassium, and healthy fats. | |

FOCUS ON MORE OF THESE

Vegetables

Fruits

Whole Grains

Fish & Seafood

Legumes & Nuts

LIMIT THESE

Deep-fried Foods

Fatty Meats

Sugary Drinks & Treats

Too Much Salt

THE FILIPINO WAY TO A HEALTHIER HEART

Small, consistent choices add up. Enjoy our beloved Filipino dishes—made healthier for a longer, stronger, and happier life.

BALANCE. MODERATION. MOVEMENT. These are the keys to a healthy heart—today and every day.

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A practical template — adjust portions to your own calorie, sodium, and potassium targets as advised by your physician.