Hyperlipidemia, also known as high cholesterol, is a condition in which cholesterol builds up in the blood. Cholesterol is a fat-like substance, and having high cholesterol puts you at risk of heart disease. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States.

Fact 1: Having excess weight or obesity increases your chances of developing high cholesterol, high triglycerides and fatty liver disease.

- Each 10 pounds of excess fat produces an additional 10 mg. of cholesterol daily.
- Lipid levels increase in people affected by obesity.
- Obesity is a common cause of high triglycerides.
- High triglycerides are a common cause of fatty liver disease.
- A fatty liver interferes with the liver’s job to filter harmful substances and may cause liver failure.

Fact 2: There are two different kinds of cholesterol: low-density lipoproteins (LDL or bad cholesterol) and high-density lipoproteins (HDL or good cholesterol).

- Too much build up of bad cholesterol (LDL) in the blood causes narrowing of the blood vessels.
- The higher the level of LDL cholesterol in the blood, the GREATER the chance of developing heart disease.
- People with high total cholesterol have approximately twice the risk of heart disease as people with optimal levels.

Fact 3: Body shape and body fat play an important role in abnormal lipid levels.

- An apple-shaped body or central obesity is a factor in lipid abnormalities.
- People with a large amount of body fat have higher levels of LDL (bad cholesterol) and triglycerides, and lower levels of HDL (good cholesterol) cholesterol in the blood.

Fact 4: Weight-loss can help lower cholesterol levels.

- Studies in which patients affected by obesity and high cholesterol who lost approximately 10 percent or less weight appeared to reduce cholesterol levels.
- A weight loss of about 20 pounds has been shown to reduce LDL by 15 percent and triglycerides by 30 percent as well as increase HDL and reduce total cholesterol levels.
Fact 5

Approximately 71 million American adults (33.5%) have high LDL, or “bad,” cholesterol.⁴

- Nearly 1 in every 2 American women has high or borderline high cholesterol.⁷
- Children affected by excess weight or obesity are more likely to have total cholesterol levels of greater than 200 mg/dl than normal-weight children and adolescents.⁸
- Levels of high LDL cholesterol by ethnicity:⁴

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race or Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Men (%)</th>
<th>Women (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Blacks</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>27.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexican Americans</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>31.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Whites</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References:

2. 2013 ACC/AHA Guideline on the Treatment of Blood Cholesterol to Reduce Atherosclerotic