**HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR CHOLESTEROL RESULTS**

If you have an appointment to come back for the NHS health check these results will be discussed at that appointment.

Cholesterol is made in the liver and is needed to keep the cells of the body healthy. However, cholesterol is also found in the foods we eat and a high level can cause blockage of the arteries which may lead to a heart attack or stroke.

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL - this is the amount of cholesterol in your blood. If you have health problems such as diabetes ***we may want this result to be less than*** ***5, however, if you are healthy a high result is nothing to be concerned about, the types of cholesterol are more important.***

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| ***Put your result here and compare with above:*** |

TRIGLYCERIDES – ***should be less than 1.8*** – This is a fatty substance stored in fat cells in the body but also found in certain foods. High levels can block the arteries.

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| ***Put your Triglyceride result here and compare with above:*** |

HDL – ***should be more than 1.20*** - this is *good* cholesterol so the higher the result the better. It carries cholesterol away from the arteries back to the liver. If the result is low then it is external factors that influence HDL. Losing weight, stopping smoking, decreasing alcohol and exercise can all increase production.

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| ***Put your HDL result here and compare with above:*** |

LDL- ***should be less than 3*** - this is the *bad* cholesterol which carries cholesterol to the arteries and too much of it can cause it to stick to the artery walls causing disease which can lead to a heart attack or stroke. LDL is found in foods we may eat. The lower this result the better

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| ***Put your LDL result here and compare with above:*** |

RATIO- this is the balance of good versus bad cholesterol. ***If the result is greater than 6 then medication may be beneficial. The lower the result the better***

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| ***Put your Ratio here and compare with above:*** |

NON HDL- the bad cholesterol left when all the good is taken away – ***should be less than 4***

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| ***Put your HDL result here and compare with above:*** |

HOW TO IMPROVE MY CHOLESTEROL RESULTS

* Eat a healthy diet low in fatty foods, especially saturated fats. Examples of High fat foods include processed meat, fatty meat, hard cheeses, butter, suet, lard, whole milk and creams. Trans fats are found in fried or takeaway food, biscuits, cakes and pastries and can cause increased levels of triglycerides and LDL.
* Exercise regularly.
* Stop smoking.
* If you feel unable to make any lifestyle changes, medication such as ‘statins’ can be very successful in lowering bad cholesterol. If you wish to start a statin please ring to speak to Janenne, the Practice Nurse.
* If you decide you *can* make lifestyle changes, just make an appointment for a repeat blood test in 12 months or sooner if you feel you have made significant changes.

Websites like the British Heart Foundation or NHS choices can give more information about diet and cholesterol.