Patient Information
Hyperlipidemia

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Hyperlipidemia, or high cholesterol, refers to increased levels of lipids (fatty particles) in the blood.
- Hyperlipidemia may increase your risk of heart attack, stroke or peripheral vascular disease.
- It causes a build-up of plaque in the walls of your arteries and reduces the supply of oxygen to your heart.

SYMPTOMS

- Most people with hyperlipidemia have no symptoms.
- Build up of plaque in your arteries may lead to:
    - symptoms of heart attack - chest pain, difficulty breathing
    - TIA or stroke - speech difficulty, weakness or numbness on one side of your body
    - claudication - pain in your calves, thigh, or buttocks with walking

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- Hyperlipidemia is diagnosed by a simple blood test, performed after you have been fasting at least for 12 hours. The test includes measurements of your:
    - total cholesterol
    - LDL or "bad cholesterol"
    - HDL or "good cholesterol"
- In general, the goals for your cholesterol should be
    - total cholesterol of less than 200
    - good cholesterol (HDL) above 50
    - bad cholesterol (LDL) below 130
- Patients with certain conditions, including a history of heart attack, stroke or aortic aneurysm should have even stricter goals for their cholesterol.

TREATMENT

- Treatment of high cholesterol depends on your risk of developing heart disease. Factors that we take into consideration include:
    - your individual cholesterol numbers, including the amount of "good" and "bad" cholesterol
    - the presence of other health conditions such as heart attack or stroke
    - the presence of other risk factors for heart disease such as smoking, diabetes or high blood pressure
- Your doctor will recommend a healthy diet low in cholesterol and saturated fat.
- Your doctor may also recommend medicine to help lower your cholesterol to reduce your risk of stroke or heart attack.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or to make an appointment at URMC Cardiology at Highland Hospital, please call (585) 341-6780 or visit us online at www.highlandheart.urmc.edu

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