

Cholesterol + Diabetes: Healthy nutrition and lifestyle choices

Other Dietary Components for Diabetes and Cholesterol

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In addition to research looking at the impact of dietary fats on blood cholesterol levels, there is ongoing research into the effect that other dietary components have on blood cholesterol. Some research shows that:

Soluble fibre: binds cholesterol in the intestines thereby lowering LDL cholesterol levels.

Nuts (Almonds): their beneficial effect on blood cholesterol is likely an additive effect from their protein and monounsaturated fat content, naturally-occurring plant sterols and possibly their magnesium content.

Omega 3 Fatty Acids: while they do not appear to directly affect blood cholesterol levels, omega 3 fatty acids may help lower triglycerides levels in addition to their other cardiovascular health benefits.

However, further research is required to determine safe and appropriate therapeutic use of these other dietary components for those with diabetes.

Bottom line: When not used in therapeutic amounts, other dietary components with probable benefits for those with diabetes and high blood lipid levels can fit within general healthy eating recommendations for those living with diabetes.

Unless contraindicated, people living with diabetes should consider:

- Including sources of **soluble fibre** in their daily diet. A few dietary sources include: psyllium-enriched breakfast cereals, apples, pears, oranges, sweet potato, oats, barley, brussel sprouts and legumes.
- Including one ounce of nuts as part of a meal or snack daily. Because of their high fat and energy content, it is important to substitute nuts into the diet versus simply adding them in – it is most helpful to substitute them for high saturated or trans fat choices such as pastries, cheeses and so on. Sources include: almonds, walnuts
- Choose food sources of omega 3 fatty acids daily including such sources as: fatty fish (salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines) at least twice a week, flax, canola oil, walnuts, and omega 3 enriched foods.