

Natural Ways to Lower Blood Sugar and Cholesterol

Two major indicators of chronic disease are high blood sugar and high cholesterol levels. Diabetes is an epidemic affecting more than 30 million Americans, and 95 million people suffer from high cholesterol, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And those factors can contribute to cardiovascular disease, heart attack, and stroke.

The good news is there are simple changes you can make to your lifestyle that may help reduce a high blood sugar level that can lead to diabetes, and also lower total cholesterol without the potentially unpleasant and even dangerous side effects of prescription drugs.

“The most powerful intervention a person can make to lower both their blood sugar and cholesterol is to eat more vegetables and beans, and fewer animal products, flour, and oil,” Dr. Joel Fuhrman, author of “The End of Diabetes” and “The End of Heart Disease,” tells *Health Radar*.

“It’s almost always better to choose natural ways to lower your [blood sugar and cholesterol] levels than to resort to pharmaceuticals that may have nasty side effects,” says Dr. Ellen Kamhi, Ph.D., a natural health expert and the author of “The Natural Medicine Chest.”

Here are some ways to safely achieve a healthy blood sugar and cholesterol profile:

Eat at least one large green salad daily. Fuhrman adds: “Do

not use an oil-based dressing. Choose a nut or seed dressing such as almonds blended with tomato and balsamic vinegar.”

Spice up your meals with cinnamon. Kamhi says that cinnamon has been used since ancient times for its flavor, aroma, and medicinal benefits. “A study in the journal *Diabetes* supports the use of cinnamon to help balance blood sugar,” she tells *Health Radar*.

Try fenugreek seeds. They also help lower blood sugar due to their high fiber content, which slows down carbohydrate digestion and absorption. Fenugreek may also stimulate insulin production and improve blood sugar balance, says Kamhi.

Exercise. Exercise is an important cholesterol regulator, and has been linked to decreased total cholesterol levels. “Any form of regular exercise is acceptable as long as it is practiced 30-45 minutes, six days a week,” she advises. According to a 2008 study, after one week of aerobic exercise participants with Type 2 diabetes had improved their whole-body insulin sensitivity.

Add red yeast rice and aged garlic extract. Dr. Matthew Budoff, professor of medicine at UCLA and Endowed Chair of Preventive Cardiology, tells *Health Radar* that these two natural substances can be used together to help lower cholesterol significantly. According to a recent study, garlic also has the potential to manage blood sugar levels and can lower fasting blood glucose.

Control stress. Stress can cause blood sugar levels to fluctuate, and according to experts, people under intense stress often will neglect their diabetes care, further exacerbating the situation.

Keep a positive attitude when things seem to be going wrong and learn how to be kind, especially to yourself. According to an article that appeared on the website Healthline, there is also compelling evidence that your level of stress can cause an increase in bad cholesterol.

Dress your food with apple cider vinegar. This condiment is a powerhouse for health. It promotes weight loss, reduces cholesterol, and helps lower blood sugar levels according to numerous studies conducted by the National Institutes of Health. You can use it on salads and vegetables or just drink it.

Take hawthorn supplements. Kamhi says that extensive research has shown that the leaves, berries, and flowers of the hawthorn plant can make good medicine. “It helps to lower not only total cholesterol but also helps lower blood pressure, making it an excellent natural remedy for heart disease,” she says.

Hawthorn berries are loaded with antioxidants, which are effective for reducing the risk of Type 2 diabetes, according to the National Institutes of Health. Consult with your healthcare provider before taking hawthorn, especially if you are already on prescription heart medications. □