



HEART HEALTH

HOW TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL NATURALLY

HONEST + GOODNESS NUTRITION

H O N E S T + G O O D N E S S N U T R I T I O N



A B O U T M E

My name is Claire O'Brien and I'm the owner of Honest + Goodness Nutrition.

I now work with clients to help them feel energised and in control of their heart health.

Like a lot of families, mine has a long history of high blood pressure and heart conditions.

I love to help people to regain their confidence in their choices and feel like they are able to enjoy life without the worrying or feeling guilty about their food choices.

It broke my heart to see them give up entirely and spend years beating themselves up for not doing the right thing and lose their confidence.

I hope you enjoy this free guide, if you have any questions, get in touch!

G E T I N T O U C H

E: hello@honestgoodness.ie
W: www.honestgoodness.ie

i: [@honest_goodness_nutrtn](https://www.instagram.com/honest_goodness_nutrtn)
f: [@honest + goodnees nutrition](https://www.facebook.com/honest+goodnessnutrition)

DO SOMETHING TODAY THAT YOUR FUTURE SELF WILL THANK YOU FOR.

Our actions and decisions today will shape
the way we will be living in the future.

I'm so glad you decided to download this guide and take steps to improve your heart health by lowering your cholesterol naturally. By following the content of this guide you will not only be able to reduce your cholesterol and improve your overall heart health, you will feel more energised, and have noticeably better digestion.

Let's start by looking at cholesterol and what function it serves and reasons why you have high cholesterol.

WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a fatty, waxy substance found in animal tissues and various foods. Our liver is able to create all the cholesterol we need.

We also get dietary cholesterol when we eat animal products like meat, dairy and eggs. The amount we produce in our own body is far more significant than the cholesterol we consume in our foods.

The most commonly discussed types of cholesterol are LDL ('bad') and HDL cholesterol (good). There are more than two types of cholesterol but these are usually not tested for in a standard blood test.

WHY DO WE HAVE CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is used by our body as a building block for hormones. Cholesterol also helps with protection, insulation and signalling of nerve cells and repair of damaged arteries.

Cholesterol is also needed for vitamin absorption for Vitamin D, A, E and K. These vitamins are needed by your heart, kidneys and liver to function properly. They are also needed by our body to support a healthy immune system, for healthy bones and teeth and healthy skin, hair and nails.



HOW TO LOWER YOUR CHOLESTEROL NATURALLY

It is important to understand the reason why you have high cholesterol so that you are able find a sustainable way to keep your cholesterol in balance.

Diet and lifestyle changes like avoiding ultra-processed foods, sugars and refined grains are proven ways to reduce your cholesterol naturally.

Reducing exposure to cigarette smoke, excess alcohol, stress and getting adequate sleep also reduces your cholesterol.

Supporting liver function and consuming functional foods which encourage HDL product, regulates LDL production and regulates TG are two main aims of a heart healthy diet and lifestyle programme. Let's look at each of these in more detail.



KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

LDL cholesterol stands for low density cholesterol often considered 'bad' the optimum range is no more than **3 mmol/l** but for people with arteriosclerosis or other heart disease it is no more than **1.8 mmol/l**

HDL cholesterol is high density lipoprotein often considered as 'good', the optimum range is more than **1 mmol/l**

Triglyceride (tg) levels should be below 150-199 mg/dl or 1.8 mmol/l .



DETOX SUPPORT

When it comes to detoxing your body, you're mind may go to celebrity endorsed teas or juice fasts. This is not type of detoxing support your body needs. Your liver, skin and kidneys do an amazing job of detoxing your body naturally.

Your liver is responsible for creating and breaking down your LDL, HDL and triglycerides. It also preforms over 500 other functions. So it can become congested. For some people it is one part or other of the detox process that is just a little slower. There are many reasons for this including genetics.

We can support our liver by reducing the detox burden by reducing our alcohol intake to 5-7 units per week, reducing exposure to cigarette smoke, exposure to air pollutants e.g. petrol fumes and chemicals.

We can also support our liver with foods such as dark leafy vegetables e.g. kale, broccoli, chard and teas including fennel, peppermint, milk thistle, burdock root, dandelion root, chamomile and ginger root.

If you have high blood pressure, it is best to avoid teas containing licquorice.

Adequate hydration is also extremely important for detoxing your body, it helps your liver to flush out toxins and waste through sweat, urine and bile.

The average person requires 2.5 - 3 litres of water from water, foods and herbal teas per day; depending on exercise and body weight.



Functional foods:

Fibre: Found in foods such as kidney beans, brussel sprouts, oats, apples and pears, soluble fibre has been shown to reduce LDL cholesterol. It's recommended that your total fibre intake is at least **5 grams per serving of a food**, or a total of 25–35 grams fibre per day.

Avocados: Research suggests that adding avocado to your daily diet can help lower LDL cholesterol levels in people who are overweight. Avocado oil is also a healthy choice for salads.

Omega 3: Found in oily fish including salmon, sardines, mackerel and tuna as well as in algae, walnuts and flaxseeds, omega 3 has been shown to reduce triglycerides. If supplementing always choose one that has a high DHA content.

Nuts: A recent study has shown that almonds and walnuts can reduce cholesterol in your blood. This is a high-calorie snack so if you are on a weight loss programme, use chopped nuts as a condiment to sprinkle over meals rather than as a snack.

Ginger: As well as adding flavour to meals and herbal teas, recent studies have found that ginger can lower total cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

Green Tea: A large-scale study carried out in 2011 found that green tea lowered total cholesterol and blood cholesterol levels in adults. Green tea is also available as an extract or in supplement form for those who do not enjoy the taste!



SUGAR

Consuming too much sugar on a regular basis is not heart healthy. Whether that comes from sweet treats or simple carbohydrates like white bread and crisps, sugar can lower your HDL cholesterol (not good) and significantly increase your LDL cholesterol (bad).

Sugar spikes your blood sugar and raises insulin which, independent of weight, causes inflammation and increases your risk of heart disease.

So swap your treats for fruit and veg and your simple carbs for slow release versions.

PROCESSED FOODS

Ultra-processed foods such as pizza, donuts, sweetened breakfast cereals, packaged soups, chicken nuggets, hot dogs and chips also act to increase your LDL cholesterol.

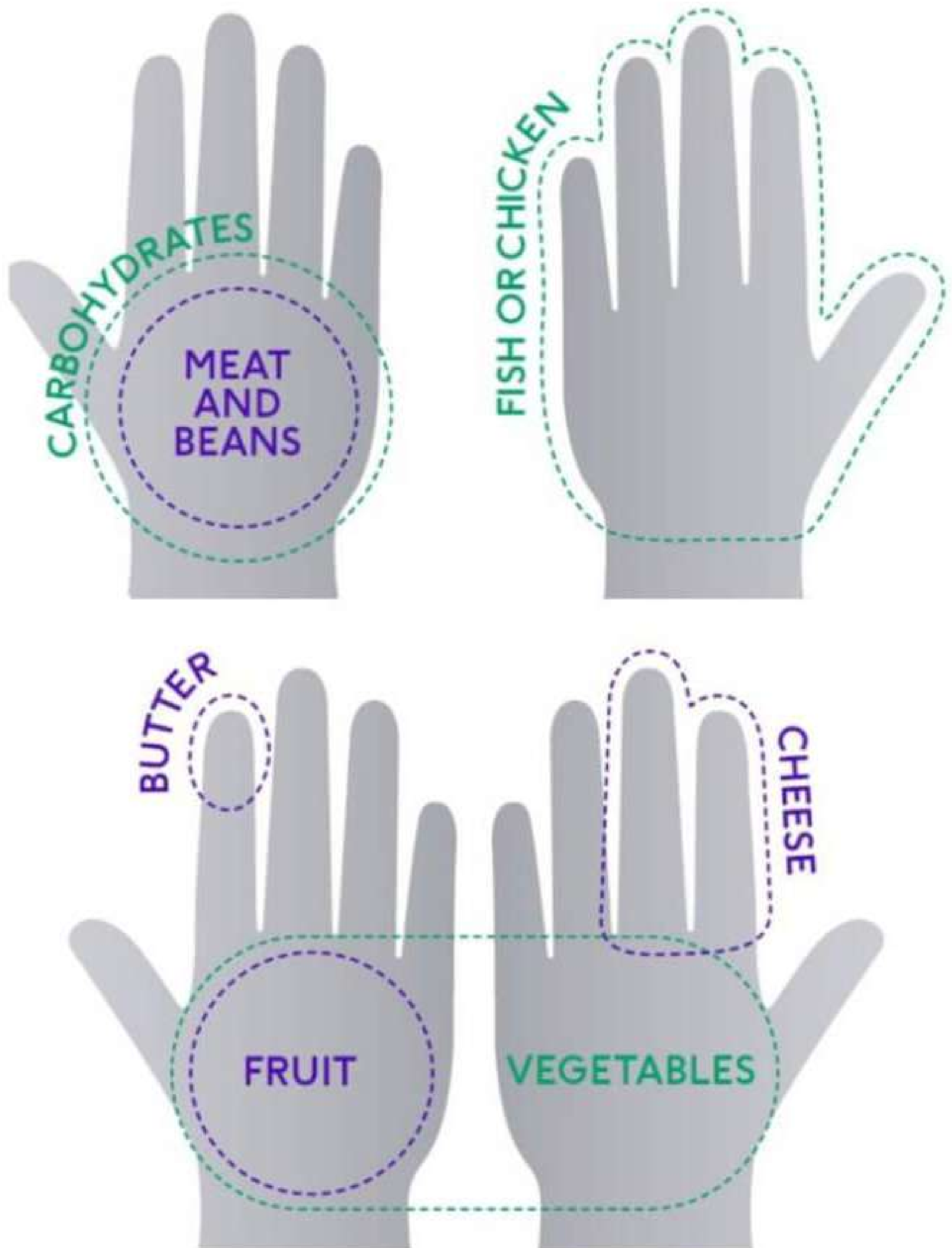
Your digestive system and liver struggles to break down these fats and it can cause congestion. Save these treats for special occasions and choose home cooked options such as home-made soup, oats, and baked potatoes instead.

PORTION SIZES

Balancing your meals to ensure you have enough protein and vegetables as well as grains and fats will keep you fuller longer, help you achieve a health weight, and help avoid blood sugar spikes and dips. Use the portion size guide on the next page to help balance your meal times.

How to get portion sizes right

Using your hands is an easy way to measure food portions.



IF YOU FOCUS ON RESULTS, YOU WILL NEVER CHANGE. IF YOU FOCUS ON CHANGE, YOU WILL GET RESULTS.

Lower cholesterol with lifestyle changes.

When it comes to achieving a healthy cholesterol level, lifestyle changes are important. Finding a ways to rest and relax help your body to lower LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. Exercise is needed to increase your HDL cholesterol and for prevention of plaque formation.

MANAGING STRESS

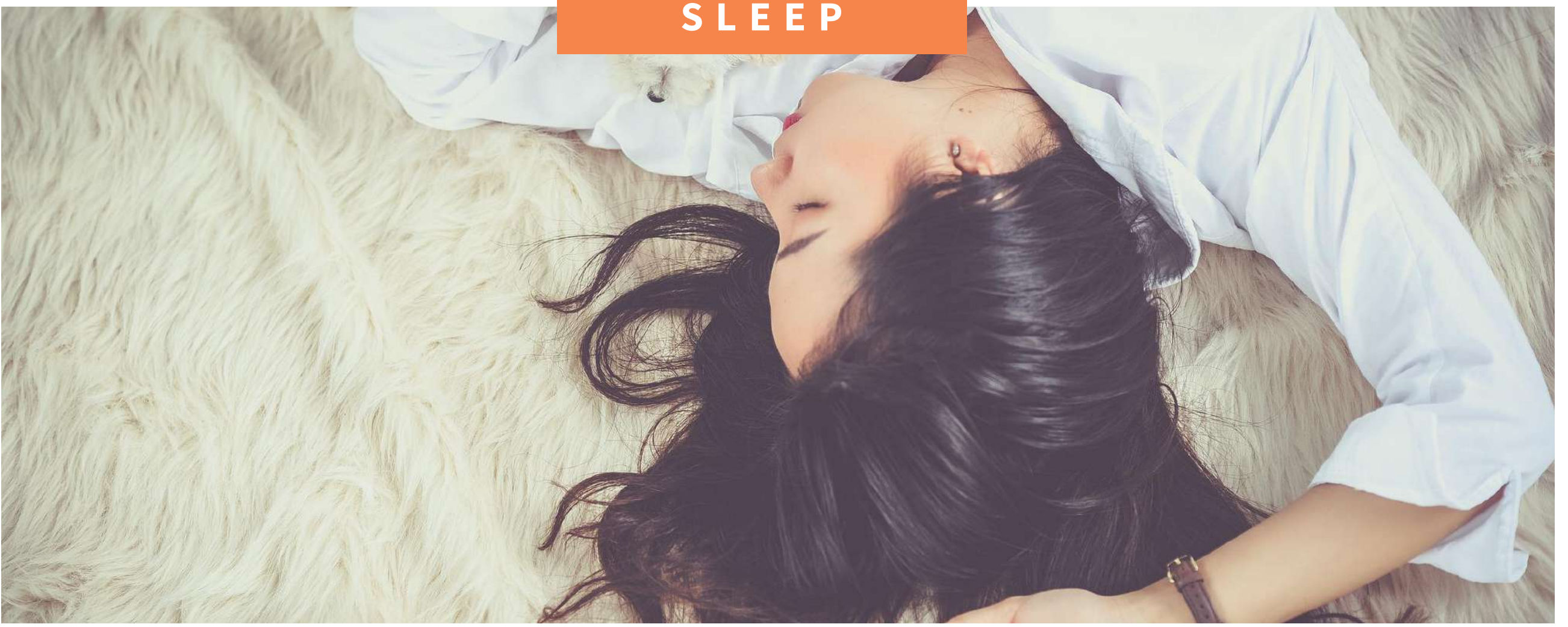
Chronic stress is a major driver of heart disease. When we are stressed we release a stress hormone called cortisol. The long-term effects of cortisol on the body include higher levels of triglycerides, blood cholesterol, blood sugar levels, and blood pressure. It can also promote the buildup of plaque in the arteries.

Finding ways to de-stress such as deep breathing exercises, gardening, dancing, laughing, singing (even in the shower or car), journaling, enjoying a relaxing bath or walking in nature are all wonderful ways of managing your stress.

EXERCISE

The recommended minimum amount of exercise required is 35 minutes 5 days a week or 20 minutes 7 days a week.

However as a preventative measure it is recommended that you exercise to a higher intensity for 45 - 1 hour 3-4 times a week e.g. HIIT (high intensity interval training), sprinting or spin class along with weight lifting, weight bearing or resistance exercise such as yoga or using resistance bands.



Tips for better sleep

- **Get regular:** One of the best ways to train your body to sleep well is to go to bed and get up at more or less the same time of every day. This sets a rhythm for your body.
- **Avoid caffeine, alcohol + nicotine:** It is best to avoid having any caffeine (including coffee, tea, cola, and chocolate), alcohol or nicotine for at least 4-6 hours before bed. These are stimulants and interfere with your ability to fall asleep. Drink a 'sleepy tea' e.g. chamomile or lemon balm before bed.
- **Bed is for sleeping:** Do not use your bed for anything other than sleep or sex. If you use your bed to watch TV, read, eat, work or other things, your body will not learn to connect it with sleep.
- **The right space:** It is very important that your bed and bedroom are quiet and comfortable for sleeping. A cooler room with enough blankets to stay warm is best.
- **Exercise:** Regular exercise is a good idea to help with good sleep, but try not to do strenuous exercise in the 4 hours before bedtime. Morning walks are a great way to start the day feeling refreshed!
- **Meditation:** Studies have found meditation and deep breathing to be a positive aid in improved sleep quality; the calming of nerves and reduced anxiety that often follows meditation assists psychological and physiological preparation for sleep.

MY PLAN



WHAT IS MY CURRENT CHOLESTEROL NUMBER?

WHY DO I WANT TO CHANGE IT?


HOW CAN I ADD MORE FRUIT & VEG TO MY DAY?

HOW MUCH WATER WILL I DRINK EACH DAY, AND
WHEN WILL I DRINK IT?

WHAT NEW SNACKS WILL I TRY?

HOW MUCH EXERCISE WILL I DO THIS WEEK?
(BE REALISTIC!)

WHAT OTHER CHANGES WILL I MAKE?

The background of the image features a light grey surface. In the top left, a portion of a spiral-bound notebook with a blank white page is visible. Below the notebook, a white smartphone lies diagonally with its screen off. In the bottom left corner, there is a small, vibrant green plant with long, pointed leaves.

Want to get bespoke
support when it
comes to lowering
cholesterol?

Get in touch with me by email
hello@honestgoodness.ie and
we can jump on a call to see
how I can help.