

What to know about cholesterol

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intake is important because the level of cholesterol already present in your blood can be increased by high consumptions of cholesterol and saturated fat intake. High cholesterol is responsible for 70 percent of heart attacks and is the major killer of both men and women after the age of 45. It leads blockage of the arteries, heart attacks, hardening of arteries, blood clots, clogged arteries, and stroke. The average American eats about 360 milligrams of cholesterol per day but the American Heart Association recommends that we limit our daily cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams. People with high levels of

cholesterol in their blood should consume even less. Surprisingly, our bodies make all the cholesterol it needs so it is important that we limit our daily cholesterol intake.

To maintain a healthy cholesterol level you should have your cholesterol tested every three to five years and even more often if you have been diagnosed with high cholesterol levels. When you have high cholesterol, a few basic life changes may make a difference. Making good diet choices is your first line of defense when trying to improve your cholesterol levels. There are three important steps to remember when it comes to your diet:

- Step one - Avoid foods high in fat such as fatty red meats, bacon, butter, lard, whole milk, and whole milk dairy products.

- Step two - Replace animal fats with vegetable oils. Use vegetable oil or olive oil instead of butter or lard.

- Step three - Enjoy low fat foods such as fruits, vegetables, fish, chicken (skinless) and lean meats, whole-grain cereals, pastas and rice, fat free or 1 percent milk, and fat-free or low-fat yogurt and cheese.

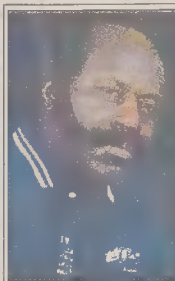
In addition to a change in diet, exercise is also an excellent strategy for reducing levels of LDL cholesterol. Most people try to exercise 30 minutes a day. However, before you begin to exercise

be sure to consult your physician to decide which exercise regimen is right for you. When dieting and exercise aren't enough your physician may decide that you need medication added to your regimen. However, medication can't do it alone and it is therefore important to maintain a healthy diet and exercise regimen even if you are taking medication to help control your cholesterol.

Contribution by Curtis Moore and Shatima Seward

For more information about the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health, visit <http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth>. Or call (336)713-7578.

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Russell Lee Brown

Not just average ski club

Continued from page 1B
never skied, Carrington said that many of their members are beginners, and there are even existing members who've never skied.

On the national level, the NBS is a predominantly black organization, with a membership averaging between ages 40-55 but open to new members of all ages, races, and backgrounds.

"The Breezers are the youngest group, averaging between the ages of 25 and 35," said Carrington. "We have members that are younger; I think the youngest is 22, and older; with the oldest being 60."

Carrington explained it's more than the skiing that draws people in, as the group specializes in non-traditional activities, not just skiing.

"There's a perception in the marketplace around what [blacks] do and don't do," he said. "As you go north, you'll find more African Americans involved in these groups. People don't

think about African Americans skiing...or scuba diving, but it's like black motorcycle clubs. We do a lot of things people don't think is traditional, it just doesn't get exposure."

On their 2007 winter schedule the group has planned ice skating, movie nights, bowling, not to mention a Super Bowl party, in addition to numerous ski trips, with a big event in February.

"Each year, thousands of our members look forward to attending our annual NBS Summit or Mini-Summit events," said NBS President Rose Thomas Pickrum.

"The Summit is a biennial fundraiser of the National Brotherhood of Skiers, bringing together thousands of people from all across the country for a week of winter sports fun."

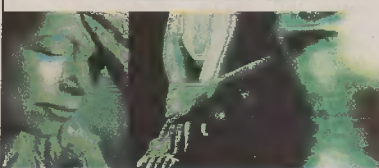
Summits are held during odd years, with the primary purpose to raise funds for the NBS Olympic Scholarship Fund, designed to provide financial support for excep-

tional athletes of color who excel in winter sports. The intent is to propel these

young athletes to Olympic and international competition.

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