

- Food—cholesterol content

Befriend healthy cholesterol for wellrounded nutrition

Cholesterol has a bad rap as the villain in our diet. But there are some healthy sources that are good for you

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Cholesterol — the very word is sure to send shivers down your spine. Yes, it has been demonised for a while now. But how can something that our bodies produce naturally be harmful? “Cholesterol is a fat-like substance, naturally produced in our liver. It is an essential building block for our cell membranes. It is also necessary for producing hormones, vitamin D, and bile, which works to digest fatty foods,” explains celebrity nutritionist Parul Malhotra Bahl.

Recent research shows that, for most people, eating healthy high-cholesterol foods is not harmful. Some cholesterol-rich foods are loaded with important nutrients that are often missing in people’s diets. Let’s look at some highcholesterol foods that are considered healthy.

EGGS

“Eggs contain about 60% of the daily value of cholesterol you need and only 8% of your allowance for saturated fat. They are high in protein, low in calories, contain vitamin B, iron and disease-fighting nutrients,” shares Bahl.

SHELLFISH

Some shellfish like shrimps are high in cholesterol and almost negligible in saturated fats. These also serve as a great source of protein, vitamin B, selenium, iron and zinc.

CHEESE

Different types of cheese have varying nutritional content, but most varieties provide a healthy amount of calcium, protein, vitamins A and B. Since cheese is high in calories and saturated fat, consuming it in limited portion sizes is advised.

FULL-FAT YOGHURT

“Full-fat yoghurt is a cholesterol-rich food packed with nutrients like protein, calcium, phosphorus, vitamin B, magnesium, zinc and potassium. Being a fermented food, it’s good for intestinal and gut health,” says Bahl. However, one must watch their portion size since full-fat yoghurt is a little high in saturated fats.

MODERATION IS KEY

“The nutritional benefits of healthy high-cholesterol foods generally outweigh the cholesterol content in them. Most people can consume healthy highcholesterol foods in moderation, along with a balanced diet. If you are confused and don’t know how to add these healthy cholesterol-rich foods to your diet, reach out to your nutritionist for guidance,” suggests Bahl.

She also adds that highcholesterol foods that have saturated and trans fats, like fried foods, processed foods, packaged foods and desserts, must be avoided. Those who already have high blood cholesterol levels must limit all highcholesterol foods (even if healthy) in their diets.