

## For Immediate Release

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**Date:** September 1, 2006  
**From:** The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

### ***September is National Cholesterol Education Month-New Consumer Booklet Has Lifestyle Tips to Reduce Heart Disease Risk*** **A Little TLC Goes a Long Way toward Reducing High Cholesterol**

If you're one of the nearly 65 million Americans with high blood cholesterol, National Cholesterol Education Month (September) is a perfect time to read a new publication designed to help you make the lifestyle changes needed to reduce cholesterol and, with it, your risk for heart disease.

*Your Guide to Lowering Your Cholesterol with TLC (Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes)* from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health details a three-part program of diet, physical activity, and weight management designed to bring cholesterol levels down.

“Lifestyle is crucial for lowering cholesterol but it's not enough to tell people it's important—you have to help them do it. This guide offers a set of tools to help people get started and to embrace a heart-healthier way of living,” said the NHLBI's James Cleeman, M.D., coordinator of the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP).

The 80-page easy-to-read booklet is based on the NCEP's guidelines on cholesterol management. These guidelines emphasize the importance of therapeutic lifestyle changes (TLC)—intensive use of heart-healthy eating, physical activity, and weight control—for cholesterol management. TLC is the cornerstone of treatment, according to Cleeman, even if someone also has to take a cholesterol-lowering medication.

As the booklet explains, following a TLC diet means reducing saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol in order to lower LDL, the “bad” cholesterol. How do you know how low your LDL cholesterol should be? Your goal LDL level is determined by your risk for developing heart disease or having a heart attack. To help you determine your risk, the new guide includes the NCEP 10-year coronary heart disease risk calculator. Once your LDL goal is determined, you and your doctor can use the new booklet to implement TLC and reach your goal.

In addition to what you eat, how much you move is also important for heart health. Lack of physical activity is an important risk factor for heart disease. Inactivity contributes to weight gain and raises LDL as well as lowering HDL, the “good” cholesterol. The booklet offers a step-by-step program to get people moving and includes a chart of calories burned in common activities.

“TLC is more than a diet. It's really a change in your way of living to help you stay heart healthy,” said Dr. Cleeman.

The new guide is the latest in the NHLBI *Your Guide to Better Health* series. The series provides easy-to-read science-based health information and features compelling testimonials from people about their real-life health issues. Other Guides include *Your Guide to Lowering Your Blood Pressure With DASH*; *Your Guide to a Healthy Heart*; *Your Guide to Physical Activity and Your Heart*; *Your Guide to Living Well With Heart Disease*; and *Your Guide to Healthy Sleep*.

For an online version of the new booklet, go to: [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol\\_tlc.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol_tlc.htm). Printed copies are available for \$4.00 through the NHLBI website or from the NHLBI Information Center at P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105, or at 301-592-8573 or 240-629-3255 (TTY).