

Cracking the Myth – How Eating Eggs Helps Lower Bad Cholesterol

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › A study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that eating two eggs daily lowered LDL cholesterol, while high saturated fat diets raised it
- › Researchers found cholesterol from eggs did not raise LDL, but saturated fat from foods like bacon and sausage did, showing food context makes a major difference
- › Eggs provide cholesterol without overloading the liver, allowing it to clear LDL efficiently and preventing artery buildup that increases heart disease and stroke risk
- › Weekly egg intake reduced heart disease deaths by 29% and all-cause mortality by 17% in older adults, highlighting the importance of moderation for protective benefits
- › Choosing pastured eggs, avoiding vegetable oils, and pairing eggs with nutrient-rich whole foods further boost benefits while minimizing harmful omega-6 linoleic acid (LA) intake

For decades, eggs carried an unfair reputation – they were labeled “cholesterol bombs,” and that eating them regularly would clog arteries, drive up “bad” cholesterol levels, and inevitably raise your risk of heart disease. Health authorities recommended limiting or even avoiding eggs, leaving many people confused and hesitant to enjoy one of nature’s most nutrient-rich foods.

But science has now evolved and so has our understanding of cholesterol. Mounting research now shows that dietary cholesterol from eggs has little impact on blood cholesterol for most people. In fact, under the right conditions, eating eggs may actually help lower unhealthy cholesterol levels and support heart health.

Eating Eggs Lowered Cholesterol in Just 5 Weeks, According to a 2025 Study

A 2025 study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition investigated how eggs, cholesterol, and saturated fat interact to influence low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, the so-called “bad” cholesterol that contributes to artery blockage and heart disease.¹

"Eggs have long been unfairly cracked by outdated dietary advice. They're unique – high in cholesterol, yes, but low in saturated fat. Yet it's their cholesterol level that has often caused people to question their place in a healthy diet." Jonathan Buckley, an exercise scientist from the University of South Australia and the study's lead researcher, said.²

The researchers designed the study to answer a simple question – does eating eggs actually raise LDL cholesterol, or is something else at play? To find out, they tested three different diets, each with a unique balance of cholesterol and saturated fat.

- **The participants were 61 adults with the same baseline cholesterol levels at the start of the trial** – Over a five-week period, they followed one of three meal plans. The first was high in saturated fat and cholesterol, the second was high in saturated fat but low in cholesterol, and the third was high in cholesterol but low in saturated fat.³
- **What made the third diet stand out is that it included two eggs per day** – Surprisingly, the group eating more eggs ended up lowering their LDL cholesterol compared to the other groups, who actually saw their LDL levels climb. According to a report from Science Alert:

*"The results showed that diets high in saturated fat correlated with a rise in LDL cholesterol levels. However, the high-cholesterol, low-saturated fat diet produced a reduction in LDL cholesterol levels – suggesting that eggs are not responsible for bad cholesterol."*⁴

- **The researchers also compared variables head-to-head** – When cholesterol came from eggs without much saturated fat, LDL went down. When cholesterol came alongside saturated fat, LDL went up. This shows the importance of food context – cholesterol doesn't act alone. It interacts with the rest of your diet, and this interaction determines whether your blood chemistry shifts toward health or risk.
- **Saturated fat influences how your liver processes cholesterol** – From a biological perspective, the explanation is straightforward. When saturated fat is high, the liver struggles to clear LDL cholesterol efficiently, leaving more of it circulating in your bloodstream. Eggs, however, supply cholesterol without overloading the system with saturated fat. This allows your body to manage cholesterol properly, preventing the buildup that causes arteries to narrow.

This study supports the notion that eggs are not the enemy; the real issue is the excessive saturated fat, particularly polyunsaturated fats (PUFs), in the other foods you eat. By choosing eggs over foods loaded with these unhealthy fats, you encourage your body to handle cholesterol in a healthier way.

"You could say we've delivered hard-boiled evidence in defense of the humble egg. So, when it comes to a cooked breakfast, it's not the eggs you need to worry about – it's the extra serve of bacon or the side of sausage that's more likely to impact your heart health," Buckley said.⁵

Debunking the Cholesterol Myth

Given the findings of this study, Buckley comments that it's about time for the public to change their perception of eggs, saying that this highly nutritious food has "long been unfairly cracked by outdated dietary advice." And what he's referring to is the cholesterol

myth – the notion that dietary cholesterol harms your heart and long-term health.

But despite conflicting reports and warnings from conventional sources, eggs are not responsible for heart disease – the featured study provides solid evidence on this. In fact, dietary cholesterol is not the villain it's made out to be.

- **Your body needs cholesterol** – It's actually found in nearly every cell of your body and is vital for optimal functioning. This waxy substance serves as a fundamental building block for cell membranes, providing structural integrity and fluidity.
- **Cholesterol acts as a precursor for various essential hormones** – It is vital in the production of vitamin D when your skin is exposed to sunlight, contributing to bone health and immune function. In your digestive system, it helps in the formation of bile acids, which are necessary for the absorption of fats and fat-soluble vitamins.
- **If you have too little, your risk of health problems increases, including all-cause mortality** – There are studies supporting this notion. For example, research published in *Frontiers in Endocrinology* found a revealing link between low total cholesterol (TC) levels and increased mortality risk in those aged 85 and above. This is because having low TC levels compromises cell function and increases your vulnerability to infections and other health problems.⁶
- **Additionally, cholesterol helps regulate inflammatory markers in your body** – With lower TC levels, you might experience enhanced inflammation, which is associated with numerous age-related diseases. I recommend reading "[Why Is Low Blood Cholesterol Associated with Increased Late Life Mortality?](#)" for a more in-depth discussion into this topic.

Eggs Protect Your Heart Health

Contrary to what many believe, eggs actually offer protective benefits for your heart. Another 2025 study demonstrates this, showing how egg consumption, especially among the elderly helped reduce the risk of dying from heart disease or other causes.⁷

- **The study involved 8,756 individuals aged 70 and older** – They were grouped based on how frequently they ate eggs – never or infrequently, weekly (one to six times per week), and daily (seven or more times per week).
- **Eggs are good, but the amount matters, too** – The study found that those who ate eggs weekly had a 29% lower risk of dying from heart disease and a 17% lower risk of all-cause mortality compared to those who rarely or never ate eggs. Interestingly, individuals who ate eggs every day did not experience the same protective benefits, showing that moderation is key.⁸
- **Following a healthy lifestyle is also crucial** – The study also revealed that the most significant benefits occurred among individuals who ate a balanced diet, stayed physically active, and avoided excessive alcohol intake and smoking. In this group, the reduction in cardiovascular mortality was especially pronounced, further reinforcing the idea that eggs can be part of a health-oriented regimen.
- **So how many eggs per week can you eat before the benefits taper off?** According to the study authors, up to six eggs a week may be beneficial in reducing the risk of death from all causes and heart disease causes among those in their senior years. Study co-author Holly Wild said, “These findings may be beneficial in the development of evidence-based dietary guidelines for older adults.”⁹

Eggs Are a Nutrition Powerhouse

Eggs are among the most nutritious foods in your kitchen. They’re loaded with healthy vitamins, protein, and minerals like calcium, phosphorus, zinc, and selenium.

- **Eggs support your eye health** – Lutein and zeaxanthin, two important antioxidants that build up in the retinas of your eyes, are abundant in eggs. These nutrients effectively protect your vision and help reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration.

- **Choline is one of the most important nutrients in eggs** – Discovered in 1862,¹⁰ this compound abundantly in egg yolks offers a long list of benefits, such as supporting brain function, nervous system health, DNA synthesis, healthy fetal development, liver health, and more.¹¹
- **Choline protects your cardiovascular health** – **Choline prevents homocysteine buildup**, which is a well-known risk factor for cardiovascular disease, as it contributes to arterial damage and increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Studies provide evidence that consuming a choline-rich diet helps regulate homocysteine levels, minimizing the strain on your cardiovascular system.¹²
- **Choline also supports liver health** – Your body uses choline to prevent fat accumulation in your liver. Without sufficient choline, excess fat and cholesterol will buildup in your liver, increasing your **risk of liver dysfunction**.

Since your body is not able to create enough choline on its own to meet your needs, getting this nutrient from your diet is essential. While there are other sources of choline available, like liver and beef, eggs remain the most convenient and widely available option.

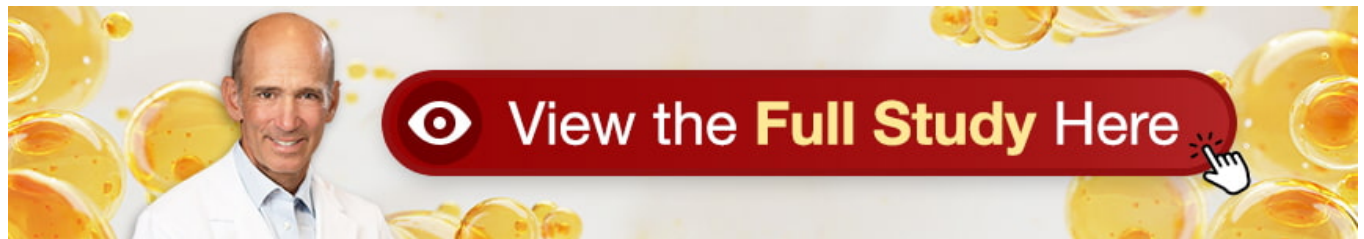
PUFs Are the Real Culprits in Your Diet

The featured study highlights another important factor – the role of saturated fats in increasing your LDL cholesterol. However, the devil's in the details, and in this case, the saturated fat in question refers to PUFs, particularly the omega-6 fat linoleic acid (LA).

- **You need LA but only in trace amounts** – Your biological need for LA is very low, ideally 1% to 2% of your daily calories. However, today it now makes up more than 15% to 25% of the typical American's caloric intake. This is because LA is found in excessive amounts in processed vegetable oils like soybean, corn, and canola – ingredients you'll find in nearly every packaged food and restaurant meal.

- **LA transforms into dangerous byproducts known as oxidized linoleic acid metabolites** – OXLAMs damage DNA, disrupt energy production, and drive chronic inflammation throughout your body. They also attack mitochondria, the energy factories inside your cells, and impair how your body produces energy. This is why LA has been associated with almost every chronic disease in today's modern world, like obesity, Type 2 diabetes, neurodegeneration, and heart disease.

I recently [published a paper in the journal *Nutrients*](#) about the long-term biological effects of LA. I encourage you to read it, as it provides a comprehensive explanation on how LA wreaks havoc in your body – and what you can do to reverse the damage.



- **LA is ubiquitous in the food supply today** – In fact, most people don't realize that the foods they've been told are heart-healthy, like certain oils, nuts, and packaged snacks, are actually loading their cells with something they weren't designed to handle in such high amounts. What's worse, LA has a biological half-life of nearly two years – meaning if you stop eating it today, you'll still be metabolizing it years from now.
- **However, most conventional eggs contain high amounts of PUFs** – This is due to the chickens' poor-quality feed, which counteracts the health benefits of eggs. If you eat more than four eggs a day, you'll likely surpass my recommended limit for linoleic acid (LA), which is 5 grams per day.

But as I said, the devil's in the details – There's a way to reap the benefits of eggs while sidestepping the LA found in conventional varieties.

Where (and How) to Get the Best Eggs

The key to make sure you're choosing the healthiest eggs is to pick pastured eggs whenever possible. Look for organically raised, free-range pastured eggs – This means the chickens have a large space to roam and forage naturally rather than being fed pesticide-laced feed.

- **Buy from trusted producers to ensure the chickens are less likely given grains high in omega-6 linoleic acid** – This results in eggs with lower PUF content and improved nutritional quality. Ashley Armstrong's farm, [Angel Acres Egg Co.](#), produces some of the highest-quality eggs I've encountered, and the secret is in the feed she gives to her chickens. As a result, their eggs contain 75% lower LA than conventional eggs.
- **Yolks provide the most nutrition** – This is where most of the nutrients are. Angel Acres Egg Co. supplies me with freeze-dried egg yolks, and because of their eggs' impressive nutrition profile, I can safely eat three raw egg yolks twice a day – a total of six.
- **However, consider moderating your consumption of egg whites** – The reason for this is that egg whites are high in tryptophan, which is a [precursor to serotonin](#) – a hormone that you want to limit because of its damaging effects on your health. I also recommend increasing your intake of glycine, as it helps reduce the effects of too much tryptophan in your system. Homemade bone broth and shanks are good glycine sources.
- **Pair eggs with other healthy foods** – What you eat with your eggs makes a big difference in their overall health effects. Instead of pairing them with processed meats like bacon or sausage, go for nutrient-dense, whole foods like fresh fruit, root vegetables, or grass fed dairy.
- **Avoid cooking eggs in vegetable oils** – These unhealthy fats are loaded with LA. Instead, use grass fed butter, ghee, or coconut oil. Better yet, consider other ways to cook eggs, like hardboiled, soft-boiled, or even poached.

- **Space out your egg consumption** – While it can be tempting to eat eggs daily, research shows one to six times per week is the sweet spot for heart and overall health. While consuming eggs daily doesn't necessarily increase your risk of illness, the benefits do decline with higher intake. Consider alternating with other choline-rich foods like liver, beef, or grass fed dairy to diversify your nutrient intake.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About Eggs and Cholesterol

Q: Do eggs raise bad cholesterol?

A: No. Research in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition shows that eating two eggs daily actually lowered LDL ("bad") cholesterol when paired with a low-saturated-fat diet.

Q: What's the real dietary problem if it's not eggs?

A: The real driver of high LDL is saturated fat, especially from processed meats like bacon and sausage, and excessive omega-6 fats from seed oils.

Q: How many eggs are safe to eat each week?

A: Studies suggest one to six eggs per week is the sweet spot for heart and overall health. Daily consumption doesn't increase risk but offers fewer added benefits.

Q: Are all eggs equally healthy?

A: No. Pastured, free-range eggs have a better nutrient profile and lower levels of harmful fats like linoleic acid compared to conventional eggs from grain-fed chickens.

Q: What are the main health benefits of eating eggs?

A: Eggs support heart health, eye health, brain function, and liver protection thanks to nutrients like choline, lutein, and zeaxanthin, while also helping regulate cholesterol efficiently.

Sources and References

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