

# Study shows exercise and diet improve cholesterol in adults

November 20 2012, by Angela Jones-Knopf

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(Medical Xpress)—A study by researchers in the West Virginia University School of Public Health shows that aerobic exercise and diet can improve cholesterol in adults.

George A. Kelley, D.A., and Kristi S. Kelley, M.Ed., researchers in the WVU Department of Biostatistics, studied the effects of [aerobic exercise](#) and diet on non-HDL-C cholesterol in adults. Non-HDL-C, calculated by subtracting the good cholesterol (high-density lipoprotein cholesterol) from total cholesterol, has been show to be the most important type of cholesterol for reducing death from [heart disease](#).

"This is the first meta-analysis to examine the effects of diet, aerobic exercise or both on non-HDL-C, which is considered by many to be the best predictor of death when compared to all of the other lipids and [lipoproteins](#)," Dr. Kelley said. "Second, while easy to do, most studies don't calculate and report non-HDL-C. However, we can calculate this as long as total cholesterol and high-density lipoprotein cholesterol are reported in the original studies."

For this study the researchers pooled the results from multiple studies that included 788 men and women who either dieted, performed aerobic exercises like walking, or did both. An approximate 11 point (7 percent) reduction in non-HDL-C was found in those who did both aerobic exercise and dieted. No significant changes were found in those groups who only dieted or did aerobic exercise alone.

"These findings suggest that diet and aerobic exercise can be an important option for lowering non-HDL-C in adults," Kelley said.

According to a recent report, [cardiovascular disease](#) is the leading cause of death in the United States, with more than 600,000 deaths annually. The study, supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health (RO1 HL069802), appears in the November issue of *Cholesterol*.

Provided by West Virginia University

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