



Making Everything Easier!™

Low-Cholesterol Cookbook

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Reduce your cholesterol level through diet and lifestyle
- Identify the foods you should eat – and those you shouldn't
- Prepare over 90 delicious, heart-friendly recipes
- Enjoy the healthiest foods when eating out

Dr Sarah Brewer, GP

Health writer and broadcaster

Dr Molly Siple, RD

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**by Dr Sarah Brewer, GP, and Dr
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Introduction

The first place to start in controlling cholesterol and lowering your risk of heart disease is with your lifestyle – in particular, by changing and improving what you eat. Sounds hard? Don't despair. The advice in this book is easy to swallow, as we're sure you'll find when you sample the delicious recipes!

Good nutrition is the most important foundation for good health. Nutrients in food work in amazing ways, on both the cellular and molecular level, to restore and maintain normal body function. The vitamins and minerals in the foods you read about in this book help to lower the level of 'bad' cholesterol in your body, while at the same time raising the good kind, and protecting your arteries from damage. And that's just the beginning of a long list of things they do. Of course, you've already taken the right first step by deciding to pick up this cookbook. Getting healthier starts in the kitchen!

The dishes in this book have been specially developed for the needs of someone whose cholesterol level is elevated. You may also need medication to treat your condition, but dietary and lifestyle changes alone often can improve your health enough to avoid the need for medicine. Do discuss your own situation with your doctor, though.

About This Book

The *Low-Cholesterol Cookbook For Dummies* provides a good overview of effective ways to control cholesterol levels, backed up by the experience of nutritionists and the results of scientific studies. Between the covers of this book, you can find the basics about fat and cholesterol in foods and about putting

together meals that give you healthy amounts of both. You also discover lots of information on the various nutrients that lower 'bad' LDL (low density lipoprotein) cholesterol or raise the 'good' cholesterol, including soluble fibre which soaks up cholesterol and escorts it out of your body. To ensure that this book is as up-to-date as possible, it also touches on some newly recognised risk factors for heart disease that tie in with managing cholesterol.

As well as all this information, you can find chapters that each cover a category of food, such as vegetables, poultry, or fish, giving you basic tips for cooking these and identifying which ones best suit a cholesterol-lowering diet. Use these recommendations to write your shopping lists. The recipe pages are also packed with useful health advice, and the introductions to the recipes are filled with nutritional information on what you're about to cook.

These recipes are so delicious that you're guaranteed to want to eat them even putting their nutritional benefits aside! Each dish features nutritious, fresh, and natural foods that have beneficial effects on your cholesterol balance. Ingredients and procedures are kept as short and simple as possible, but without sacrificing their all-important flavour.

Conventions Used in This Book

The recipes in this book are complete, but may not spell out every detail of preparing and cooking the food. For example, certain steps and techniques in cooking are standard (such as removing shells from eggs), no matter what you're preparing.

Take a quick look at the following list for points that apply to all the recipes:

- ✓ Organic foods aren't required but try to buy organic when you can, because they generally contain more antioxidants and nutrients that have a beneficial effect on cholesterol balance. If you use non-organic fruit and vegetables, wash and peel them first because this helps to remove any lingering agricultural chemicals.
- ✓ Fruits and vegetables should be washed under cold running water before using.
- ✓ Pepper is freshly ground black pepper. Invest in a pepper mill and give it a few cranks when you want pepper bursting with flavour.
- ✓ Fresh herbs are specified in many of the recipes for their bright, authentic flavour. But you can still make a recipe if you don't plan to use these by substituting dry herbs, using one-third the amount of fresh.
- ✓ Dairy products are low-fat.
- ✓ Eggs are large unless otherwise indicated.
- ✓ Canned goods are the low-sodium or no-added-salt versions.
- ✓ Food products don't contain any partially hydrogenated oils – check the labels.
- ✓ Keep pots uncovered unless we tell you to put on the lid.

Keep the following points about the recipes in mind:

- ✓ Most of the recipes are for four servings, an easy number to multiply or divide if you're feeding a crowd or you

need just two servings for you and a friend. If the recipe makes any more or any fewer servings, we tell you so at the start.

- ✓ The nutrient information given at the end of each recipe is the amount of those items in a single serving. If you choose a larger serving size, you need to increase these numbers.
- ✓ If you can't find the exact ingredient that a recipe calls for in a specific amount, don't worry. A little more or less of an item is unlikely to ruin the dish, and – who knows – if you tinker slightly with the ingredients you may invent something that you like even better.
- ✓ The preparation time estimated for each recipe includes cutting veg and assembling ingredients and measuring them. Doing this before you start cooking also makes the whole process more efficient. And you don't discover that you're out of olive oil just at the moment you need to add some.
- ✓ The temperature for all recipes is in degrees Celsius.

Here are some non-recipe conventions to be aware of when reading this book:

- ✓ *Italic* text emphasises and highlights new words or terms that we define.
 - ✓ **Boldfaced** text indicates the action part of numbered steps.
 - ✓ Monofont highlights any web addresses we refer to.
- T This tasty little tomato indicates a vegetarian recipe. You see it in the 'tabs' at the front of the recipe names in the recipe chapters.

What You're Not to Read

You don't have to read every single word we've written. We do recommend reading the regular paragraphs, however. These sections tell you the basics about controlling your cholesterol. But you don't have to read items marked with the Technical Stuff icon, which although interesting, give you more details and facts than you may want or need.

Sidebars are also optional reading. They provide supporting material on the subject of heart disease but aren't absolutely essential for finding out how to manage your cholesterol balance. And if you're already a pro at cooking, certainly skip over any cooking advice that you find obvious. But don't worry, you won't find instructions on how to boil a kettle.

Foolish Assumptions

We designed these recipes to suit a certain kind of cook:

- ✓ You're fairly handy in the kitchen. You know how to clean mushrooms without someone showing you what to do, and stuffing a chicken is no big deal; but making a *galantine* of chicken (a simmered and boned, stuffed chicken glazed in aspic) is beyond your scope, which is okay, because you won't find many elaborate cooking techniques in this book.
- ✓ You know how to shop for food. At least, you know your way around a supermarket, but when you wander into a health food store, or an ethnic supermarket, you spot all sorts of ingredients you don't even know exist. You soon will. Some recipes purposely include special ingredients,

such as date sugar, Italian Prosciutto, and oil-cured olives in various recipes to lead you into a few delicatessens.

- ✓ You want dishes with personality and flavours that get your attention, start you salivating, and keep your taste-buds tingling.
- ✓ Fiddling with recipes is normal for you when you're trying out a dish, and you're comfortable doing so. You're the only person who knows how much garlic or onion you like, for example.
- ✓ You realise that spending time cooking at least one nutritious meal per day is an important part of taking care of your health and controlling your cholesterol balance. But you're not signing on for hours of fussing in the kitchen. A recipe that lets you get in and out in an hour or less is what you're after, or you at least prefer a dish you can throw together and cook without watching the pot.

How This Book Is Organised

We've organised the chapters in this book around ways of eating and types of food proven to improve cholesterol balance. Each part is divided into chapters that address specific subjects. The following sections describe the main themes in each part.

Part I: Understanding Cholesterol Basics

These five chapters tell you what to eat and why, presenting a diet that features nutritious wholefoods, cuts back on saturated fat, and balances wholegrain carbohydrates with healthy oils. These pages are also packed with information on the nutritional components of the foods in the recipes and how they affect health in terms of biochemistry – the metabolic reactions occurring inside your cells. Useful shopping lists feature the best foods to eat.

You also get some tips on what to order in restaurants. If you intersperse cooking with eating out, you can refer to Chapter 4 to find out about the healthy foods you can order. And in Chapter 5, we give you some tips on setting up your kitchen and getting ready to cook.

Part II: Mastering the Beneficial Breakfast

Breakfast deserves its own section because it's usually the least nutritious meal of the day, and yet is also the most important. Oats are in the spotlight, of course, as a source of soluble fibre, but you also find information here about other healthy breakfast grains. In Chapter 7 on cooked breakfasts, we steer you in the direction of eating a little protein-rich fish before the sun is high in the sky. You also find out about the health benefits of eggs and how many are fine to eat per week. Chapter 8 tackles the issue of wanting breakfast but having no time to make it, and gives you ways to ensure that you eat something quick, yet healthy, to start your day right.