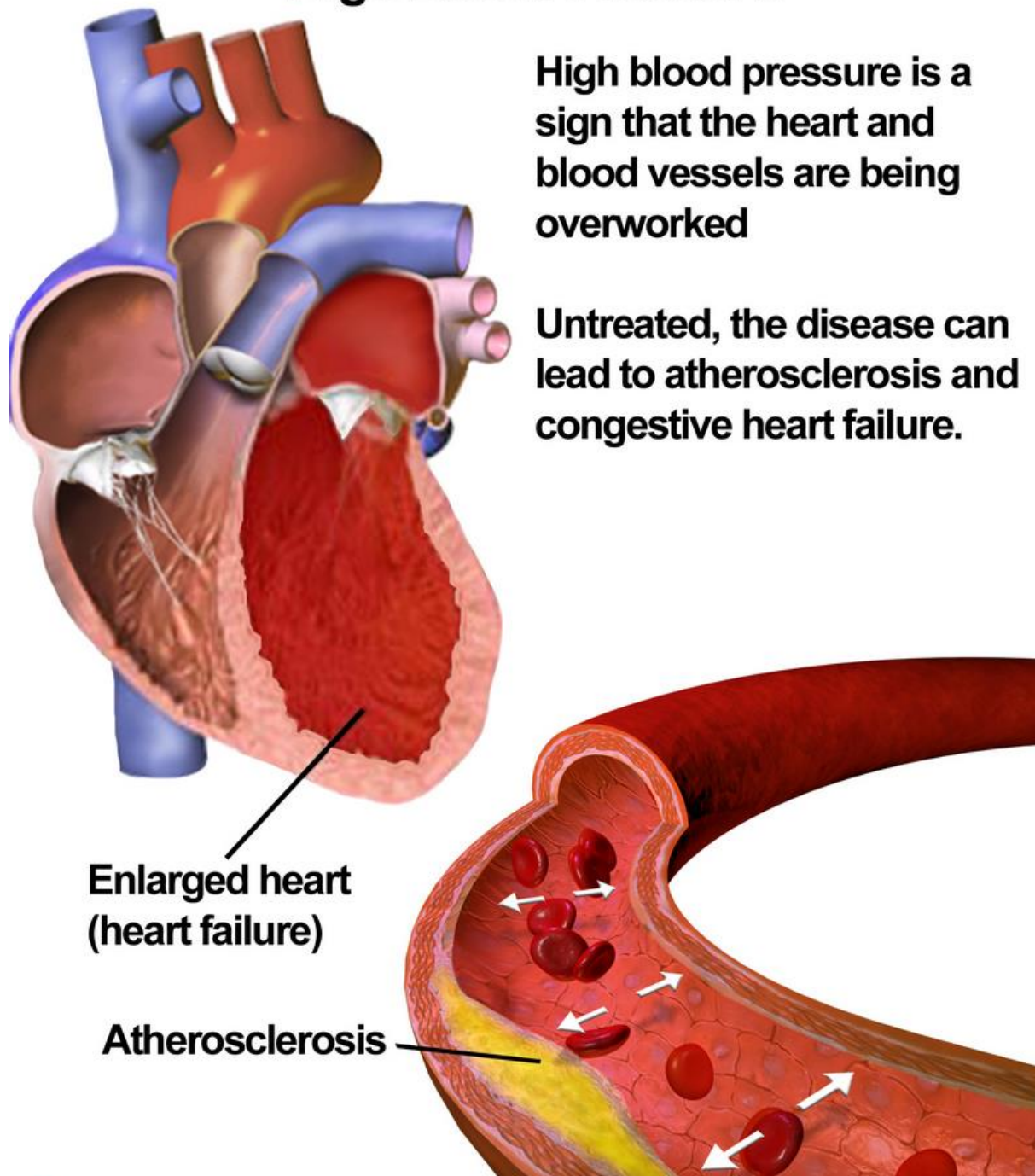# Cholesterol

Cholesterol

Overview

Cholesterol is an essential component of cells, but too much of it may have adverse effects on the body.HDL cholesterol is known as "good" cholesterol.

LDL is known as the "bad" cholesterol. People with higher levels of LDL are at a higher risk of having a stroke, heart attack and other heart problems. LDL cholesterol leads to blockages in the blood vessels.

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is a sign that the heart and blood vessels are being overworked

Untreated, the disease can lead to atherosclerosis and congestive heart failure.

Enlarged heart (heart failure)

Atherosclerosis

What causes one to have high cholesterol?

It is possible for high cholesterol to run in certain families, but diet plays a significant role in a person's cholesterol level. Foods like chips, deep-fried food, processed meats, cakes, and pastries are some of the main culprits in elevated LDL cholesterol levels.

How do I check if I have high cholesterol and how often should it be done?

A lipid or cholesterol profile is advisable to check your cholesterol levels. Depending on your age, heritage, genetics, and lifestyle, you may need to be tested more often than others.

Will having high cholesterol increase my risk of a stroke or heart attack?

Having a high cholesterol per se can increase your risk of having a stroke or heart attack. The following risk factors coupled with high cholesterol aggravates this risk:

- High blood pressure
- Cigarette smoking
- Older age
- An unhealthy diet high in saturated fat
- Having a parent or sibling with a heart disease

What lifestyle changes can be done to manage high cholesterol?

Many lifestyle changes are recommended to improve your cholesterol levels. This includes the following:

- Eating healthy and avoiding fried foods and saturated fat
- Exercising regularly
- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Quitting smoking