

Cholesterol Awareness & Education Survey Summary

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

- Establish baseline patient awareness of cholesterol as a risk factor for cardiovascular disease and stroke
- Understand patient knowledge, attitudes, and behavior regarding cholesterol treatment and management, including medication compliance and lifestyle
- Determine informational and emotional resource needs, need-gaps, and format/delivery channels

METHODOLOGY

- Online survey among 800 respondents with a history of cardiovascular disease (e.g. heart attack, stroke) or at least one major cardiovascular disease risk factor, (e.g., high blood pressure, diabetes)
- One-half of the sample (46%) had high cholesterol
- 15 minutes in length
- Field period: February 2 – 18, 2017
- Sample source: online market research panel

KEY FINDINGS

Understanding Cholesterol

- Nearly half of respondents who have a history of CVD or stroke, or who have at least one risk factor (47%) **had not had their cholesterol checked within the past year.**

Respondents with high cholesterol report more recent testing, although 21% had not had their cholesterol checked in the past year.

- Respondents who have a history of CVD or stroke, or who have at least one risk factor, **had lower perceptions of their real medical risk of cardiovascular disease.**

Only 27% thought they were at high risk for CVD or stroke.

- **Primary care providers were the healthcare professionals with whom respondents talked with about their cholesterol most often**, and were most likely to diagnose high cholesterol.

Most respondents said that their cholesterol was diagnosed by either their general practitioner/family practitioner (57%) or their internal medicine physician (10%). Only 17% of respondents said their cardiologist diagnosed their cholesterol.

KEY FINDINGS *continued*

Managing Cholesterol

- The **most common cholesterol management treatment recommendation** given by healthcare providers were **medication (79%), exercise (78%) and diet modifications (70%)**.

The most common reasons given by respondents diagnosed with high cholesterol for not complying with their doctor's treatment recommendations were a lack of motivation or willpower (16%), being challenged with multiple health conditions (14%), and needing a support system (9%).

- Most respondents with high cholesterol (89%) **said they understood the importance of managing their cholesterol.**

However, many expressed being confused (39%), discouraged (44%), and not confident (45%) about their ability to do so.

- Most respondents with high cholesterol **felt that they had sufficient information from their healthcare provider to manage their cholesterol:**
 - Importance of staying on their treatment plan (86%)
 - The relationship between cholesterol and risk for heart disease and stroke (82%)
 - Knowing what they can do to manage their cholesterol (81%)
 - Increasing their physical activity to control their cholesterol (78%)
 - How often they should get their cholesterol checked (73%)
 - The types of foods they should eat to manage their cholesterol (72%)
- However, patients with high cholesterol felt they were **least informed about these specifics:**
 - Their target body weight (64%)
 - Their goals for cholesterol management (58%)
 - The differences between the types of cholesterol (LDL vs HDL) (52%)
- Respondents with high cholesterol **prefer to get their cholesterol information from their doctor's office** – either from their doctor (71%), a nurse (21%), or educational materials in the office (21%).

Other preferred sources are: Online website (24%), Pharmacist (18%), Newsletter (18%), Email (17%)