

Study shows high cholesterol levels after Christmas

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Space-filling model of the Cholesterol molecule. Credit: RedAndr/Wikipedia

Consuming large quantities of rich Christmas food appears to boost Danes' cholesterol levels. Right after the Christmas break, levels are 20 percent higher than in the summer, according to a new study carried out

by researchers from the Department of Clinical Biochemistry at Copenhagen University Hospital and the Department of Clinical Medicine, University of Copenhagen.

All that butter and cream in Christmas food may possibly boost [cholesterol](#) levels more than previously assumed. In a new study of 25,000 Danes, researchers conclude that cholesterol levels after the Christmas holiday are 20 percent higher than they are in the summer. The study shows that the risk of having elevated cholesterol is six times higher after the Christmas break.

"Our study shows strong indications that cholesterol levels are influenced by the fatty food we consume when celebrating Christmas. The fact that so many people have [high cholesterol](#) readings straight after the Christmas holiday is very surprising," says Dr. Anne Langsted, M.D., one of the authors of the article.

Nine out of ten of the people participating in the so-called Copenhagen General Population Study had elevated cholesterol after Christmas. People who already have high cholesterol should perhaps be even more alert to their cholesterol levels during the Christmas holidays.

"For individuals, this could mean that if their cholesterol readings are high straight after Christmas, and they could consider having another test taken later on in the year," says another of the article's authors, Dr. Signe Vedel-Krogh, M.D.

"In any event, there is a greater risk of finding that you have elevated cholesterol if you go to the doctor and have your cholesterol tested straight after Christmas. It is important to be aware of this, both for doctors who treat high cholesterol and those wishing to keep their cholesterol levels down," she concludes.

The article, titled "The Christmas holidays are followed immediately by a period of hypercholesterolemia," has just been published in the international journal *Atherosclerosis*.

High blood [cholesterol levels](#) can clog arteries, resulting in a greater risk of developing heart attacks and stroke, the top causes of death worldwide.

More information: Signe Vedel-Krogh et al, The Christmas holidays are immediately followed by a period of hypercholesterolemia, *Atherosclerosis* (2018). [DOI: 10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2018.12.011](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2018.12.011)

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