What are plant sterols?
- Plant sterols, also known as phytosterols, are naturally occurring substances that have been part of the human diet for thousands of years.
- Plant sterols have a chemical structure similar to that of cholesterol.
- Small quantities of plant sterols are found naturally in foods such as fruits and vegetables, vegetable oils, nuts, seeds and whole grains.

Why are plant sterols important?
- Eating foods with added plant sterols can help lower LDL (lousy) cholesterol levels, a benefit for those persons who have high LDL-cholesterol levels, a well known risk factor for heart disease.

How do plant sterols help lower cholesterol?
- Plant sterols work by helping to remove cholesterol from the body by partially blocking its absorption into the bloodstream.
- The result is lower LDL-cholesterol levels in the blood.

Can you get enough plant sterols naturally to lower LDL cholesterol?
- No, you can’t. A typical diet provides only about 0.2 mg of plant sterols – but in order to get the recommended daily amount, you would need to eat 425 tomatoes, 210 carrots, 150 apples or 83 oranges!
- The good news is that fortified foods are available to help meet the daily requirements for plant sterols.

What is the recommended dose for plant sterols?
- Based on available evidence, an intake of 2 grams per day is needed to lower LDL cholesterol in adults. The upper intake limit is 3 grams per day of added plant sterols – it is important to note that additional cholesterol-lowering benefits will not be obtained at intakes higher than 3 grams per day.
- Children with elevated LDL cholesterol can safely consume 1 gram of plant sterols daily.
- Plant sterol enriched foods are not recommended for breastfeeding or pregnant women.

How effective are plant sterols?
- Data from clinical trials identify that foods enriched with plant sterols providing an intake of about 2 grams per day can lower LDL cholesterol levels by about 9%.
- The cholesterol-lowering effect of plant sterols varies widely among individuals:
  - Studies have found that people with high to very high blood cholesterol experience a much greater cholesterol-lowering effect than those with borderline high cholesterol.
- For best results, consume plant sterol fortified foods two or three times per day rather than only once.
Are plant sterols safe?

- Research has shown that there are no known risks or side effects from eating foods with added plant sterols. They can be taken with cholesterol-reducing medications.
- It is recommended that individuals on statin treatment advise their doctor that they are consuming plant sterol-enriched foods as the dosage of medication may need to be adjusted.

How can I increase my intake of plant sterols?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Sterol Fortified Foods</th>
<th>Plant Sterols (g)</th>
<th>Cal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Margarines</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becel pro.activ® Margarine with plant sterols, 2 tsp (10 g)</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC® Blue Menu® Celeb Margarine with plant sterols, 2 tsp (10 g)</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yogurt</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astro® Biobest® Yogurt with plant sterols, 1 container (100 g)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yogurt Drinks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astro® Biobest® Probiotic Yogurt Drink with plant sterols, 1 bottle (90ml)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC® Blue Menu® Yogurt Drink with Plant Sterols, 1 bottle (93ml)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Juices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oasis® Health Break CholestPrevent Juice, 1 cup (250ml)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minute Maid® Heart Wise Orange Juice, 1 cup (250ml)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples:**

1 yogurt and 1 serving of fruit juice = 2 grams of plant sterols per day
1 yogurt drink and 2 ½ tsp of margarine = 2 grams of plant sterols per day

**Remember…**

- It’s still important to follow a heart healthy diet and include other foods that lower cholesterol. A combination of a heart healthy diet with plant sterols will help improve blood LDL cholesterol levels.
- Plant sterols are not a substitute for heart healthy eating or for taking cholesterol-reducing medication prescribed by your doctor.