**Supplementary Table 5. Age-standardized participant characteristics according to total cholesterol level in the pooled NHS and HPFS**a

| **NHS+HPFS (Pooled)** | **Total cholesterol level** |
| --- | --- |
| **<200 mg/dL** | **≥200 to <240 mg/dL** | **≥240** **mg/dL** |
| Age, years | 69.3 (10.0) | 67.8 (9.4) | 67.3 (9.0) |
| White, % | 97.0 | 97.1 | 97.0 |
| Body mass index b, kg/m² | 26.3 (4.9) | 26.3 (4.8) | 26.5 (4.8) |
| Physical activity c, METs-hours/week | 24.2 (28.5) | 22.2 (26.2) | 20.1 (24.8) |
| Past smoking, % | 45.4 | 46.8 | 47.1 |
| Current smoking, % | 6.1 | 6.5 | 7.3 |
| Pack-years of smoking d | 13.9 (32.3) | 12.9 (24.7) | 13.6 (24.2) |
| Type 2 diabetes, % | 9.2 | 6.3 | 6.6 |
| Ever use statins, % | 36.4 | 30.0 | 40.4 |
| Total duration of statin use | 2.9 (4.9) | 1.8 (3.6) | 1.9 (3.1) |
| Family history of colorectal cancer, % | 15.8 | 16.6 | 17.5 |
| Screening colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy, % | 55.2 | 49.8 | 43.6 |
| Polyps, % | 9.5 | 9.7 | 10.0 |
| Cumulative average dose of aspirin use, tablets/week  | 2.6 (2.9) | 2.7 (3) | 2.9 (3.1) |
| Multivitamin use, % | 59.5 | 57.8 | 54.0 |
| Total folate intake, ug/day | 700 (340) | 660 (324) | 620 (315) |
| Total vitamin D, IU/day | 598 (466) | 559 (431) | 514 (397) |
| Total calcium intake, mg/day | 1300 (621) | 1270 (613) | 1209 (600) |
| AHEI | 52.9 (11.4) | 52 (11.1) | 51.1 (10.8) |
| Alcohol, g/day | 7.1 (11.6) | 7.3 (12.1) | 7.1 (12.4) |
| Red or processed meat, servings/week | 4.9 (3.9) | 4.7 (3.7) | 4.6 (3.7) |
| Total fiber, g/day | 21.8 (6.9) | 20.9 (6.4) | 20.4 (6.2) |
| Total calorie intake, kcal/day | 1791 (595) | 1770 (572) | 1754 (565) |

Abbreviations: NHS, Nurses’ Health Study; HPFS, Health Professionals Follow-up Study; kg, kilogram; m, meter; METs, metabolic equivalent tasks; ug, microgram; IU, international unit; mg, milligram; AHEI, Alternate Healthy Eating Index score; g, gram; kcal, kilocalorie.

a Updated information throughout follow-up (NHS: 1994-2016; HPFS: 1990-2014) was used to calculate the mean (SD) for continuous variables and percentage for categorical variables. All variables are age-standardized except age.

b Body mass index was calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters.

c Weekly energy expenditure in MET-hours/week from recreational and leisure time physical activity.

d Cumulative among smokers.