
Triglycerides

What are Triglycerides?

Triglycerides are a common type of fat in your blood and stores excess energy from your diet. Fat is made in the liver, and it also comes from the foods you eat. Having a high triglyceride level along with high LDL (bad) cholesterol and/or low HDL (good) cholesterol has been shown to increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. Since triglyceride levels can be affected by lifestyle and diet, it is possible to improve them.

What is considered a normal level in the blood?

Triglycerides are measured by a blood test. There are four categories of triglyceride levels based on the American Heart Association. These categories are based on fasting plasma triglyceride levels.

Triglyceride level	Fasting plasma triglyceride lab value
Normal	Less than 150 mg/dL
Borderline	150-199 mg/dL
High	200-499 mg/dL
Very High	Greater than 500 mg/dL

Your triglyceride level is: _____ Date: _____

What can cause high triglyceride levels?

Many things can cause blood triglyceride levels to rise. This includes:

- A diet high in carbohydrate/sugar/processed foods
- Excessive alcohol intake
- Being overweight
- Certain medications
- Lack of physical activity
- Some genetic disorders
- Uncontrolled diabetes, hypothyroid, kidney disease or other disorders
- Smoking

What can I do to lower my triglyceride level?

Your triglyceride level is affected by the foods you eat, your activity level and your health. Try these suggestions to lower your triglyceride level:

- If you're overweight, cut down on calories to improve your body weight. This can be done by limiting portion sizes of fats, proteins, carbohydrates, and alcohol. Contact your PACT RD about joining the MOVE program.
- Eat and drink less added sugar. Choose fewer desserts, sweetened cereals, juices, soft drinks, and other beverages sweetened with sugar.
- Drink less alcohol. Aim for no more than two standard drinks per day for men, no more than one standard drink per day for women. One standard drink is considered 12 oz. of regular beer, 5 oz. wine, 1.5 oz. distilled spirits.
- Be more active. Aim for at least 30 min of physical activity five days of the week.
- Eat less saturated fat (found most often in animal fats, coconut oil and palm kernel oil). Choose foods that are baked, broiled, or grilled. Choose low-fat dairy products.
- Choose foods rich in monounsaturated and omega-3 fats in place of those high in saturated fat. Good sources of these fats include:

Fish oil	Nuts	Olive oil
Fatty fish	Canola oil	Flaxseed oil
Avocado	Soybean oil	Walnut oil

- Consume more fiber. Include whole grain cereals, whole wheat bread and pasta, brown rice, fruits, and vegetables. Limit white bread, white rice, and white pasta.