

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Foods high in Omega-3 fatty acids can help lower triglycerides. To get more Omega-3 fatty acids in your diet choose 2 or more servings of fatty fish per week. Fatty fish include: mackerel, salmon, sardines, tuna, and tilapia.

Plant based forms of high omega-3 foods include soy foods, canola oil, flax seeds and walnuts.

The parts of Omega-3 fats that work in lowering Triglycerides are called EPA and DHA. Your doctor may prescribe a fish oil product with a total of 2-4g/day of these Omega-3 fatty acids to lower you Triglycerides.

Information in this brochure is extracted from: <http://my.clevelandclinic.org>

Reliable Sources of Nutrition Information:

www.heart.org
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/hd/hd_risk.html
www.eatright.org
www.wholegrainscouncil.org/
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/
www.foodinsight.org
www.cspinet.org

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2013

Triglycerides



The *Other* Fat

Food & Triglycerides

What are Triglycerides?

Triglycerides are fats carried in the blood from the food we eat. Excess calories, alcohol, or sugar in the body are converted into triglycerides and stored in fat cells throughout the body. Elevated triglyceride level increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

How do we measure triglyceride levels ?

A blood test called a Lipid Profile measures:

- Triglyceride level
- Total Cholesterol level
- HDL Cholesterol ("good" cholesterol), and
- LDL Cholesterol ("bad" cholesterol)

Blood samples for a triglyceride test should be taken after a 12-hour period of not eating or drinking. Many other factors affect blood triglyceride levels including alcohol, diet, menstrual cycle, time of day and recent exercise.

Guidelines for triglyceride levels are:

Normal: Under 150 mg/dl
Borderline High: 151– 200 mg/dl
High: 201 – 499 mg/dl
Very High: 500 mg/dl or higher

How can Triglycerides be lowered?

If you have high triglycerides, you may be able to reduce them without medication by following the guidelines listed in this handout which include following a low-sugar and low-fat diet, as well as limiting your alcohol intake.

How does food affect triglyceride levels?

Eating foods high in simple sugars are a major contributor to high blood triglycerides.

To limit simple sugars :

- Cut out beverages like colas, fruit drinks, iced tea, lemonade, and Kool-Aid
 - Limit hard candies, chocolates, candy bars and gummy bears
 - Avoid adding table sugar and brown sugar
 - Choose sugar-free gum or mints
 - Try light or low-sugar syrups on pancakes
 - Spread breads with no-sugar-added jams
 - Snack on whole fruit
 - Choose cereals with sugar of no more than 8 grams per serving
 - Try sugar-free gelatin and puddings
 - Choose low-sugar cookies and other desserts
- Remember, these foods are not calorie-free and may contain cholesterol-raising fats.*
- Desserts labeled "fat-free" usually contain more sugar and equal calories than the full-fat varieties
 - Moderate intake of cookies, pastries, pies, cakes and granola bars
 - Reduce intake of ice cream, frozen yogurt, sherbet, gelato, and flavored ices
 - Limit daily sugar intake to no more than 8% of your total calories each day. That's 24 grams for someone following a 1,600-calorie diet, or 40 grams for a 2,000-calorie diet

Read the ingredient list on food labels: limit these simple sugars if they are the first few ingredients:

- Sucrose
- Glucose
- Fructose
- Corn syrup
- Maltose
- Honey
- Molasses
- High-fructose corn syrup

Naturally occurring sugars, when eaten in excess, can also raise your triglyceride level.

Follow these guidelines to limit natural sugars:

- Use honey and molasses sparingly
- Choose whole fruit instead of fruit juice
- Limit the serving size of dried fruits to ¼ cup/day; dried fruits have more concentrated sugar
- Choose canned fruit in its own juice and drain.
- Limit portion sizes of mashed potatoes, yams, beans, corn and peas to ½ cup.
- Highly refined breads, cereals, pasta and crackers convert to sugar faster than whole-grain varieties. This may increase triglyceride levels.

Choose WHOLE not Refined Grains:

- Choose breads, crackers and cereals with whole grain oats, barley, corn, rice or wheat as first ingredient.
- Try whole wheat pasta or brown rice.
- Choose breads, crackers, rice and pasta with 2 or more grams of dietary fiber per serving.
- Select hot/cold cereals with 5 or more grams of dietary fiber per serving.
- Use barley, bulgur, couscous, millet or wheat berries as a side dish.
- Controlling overall portion size of grain foods.