

# TRIGLYCERIDES: What you need to know

## High triglycerides may increase your risk for heart disease

Triglycerides (mg/dL)	Level
Less than 150	Normal
150–199	Borderline high
200–499	High
500 or greater	Very high

## Healthy eating

Healthy food choices can help lower your triglycerides. Cut down on calories, portion sizes and added sugars, especially if you are overweight. Be careful when eating out, as calories and portion sizes are often different from at home.

### Vegetables & fruits

- Eat at least 4-6 servings of vegetables and whole fruits every day: broccoli, spinach, kale, green beans, apples, bananas, pears, oranges and berries.
- Choose fresh or frozen with "no added sugars."
- If you drink fruit juice, limit to ½ cup each day.

#### Examples of one serving:

- 1 medium apple
- 1 cup raw or ½ cup steamed vegetables

### Choose "good" fats

- Choose olive, canola or peanut oil, almonds, cashews, pecans, walnuts and peanuts, peanut butter, flaxseed and avocado.
- At least 2 times per week, choose fatty fish like salmon, trout, albacore tuna or mackerel.
- Remember that even "good" unsaturated fats are high in calories, so keep your portion sizes small.
- If you have very high triglycerides, you may need to keep your total fat intake very low. Talk with your nurse or doctor if you have questions about how much fat is okay for you.

### Whole grains & high-fiber

- Eat 3 servings of fiber-rich whole grains each day: whole wheat bread, whole grain barley, bulgur, farro, quinoa, brown rice, wild rice and oatmeal.
- Limit simple carbohydrates: white bread, white rice and pasta.
- Beans are another healthy high-fiber choice.

#### Examples of one serving:

- 1 slice of bread
- ½ cup cooked rice, pasta or cereal

### Limit "bad" fats

- Try to limit your saturated fats to 10-16 grams per day.
- Avoid coconut oil, palm oil and hydrogenated fat.
- Limit fatty meats like hamburgers, hot dogs, salami, sausage, and whole milk, butter, ice cream and cheese.
- Avoid trans fats, found in stick margarines, snack foods, some baked goods and fast foods.

## What are triglycerides?

Triglycerides (TG) are fats found in the blood. *Lower is better.*

## What increases triglycerides?

- Smoking
- Unhealthy eating
- Inactive lifestyle
- Overweight/obesity
- High blood sugar/ diabetes
- Certain illnesses
- Family history
- Some medications

