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Triglycerides

What are triglycerides?

Triglycerides are a type of fat. They are the most common type of fat in your body. They come from foods, especially butter, oils, and other fats you eat. Triglycerides also come from extra calories. These are the calories that you eat, but your body does not need right away. Your body changes these extra calories into triglycerides and stores them in fat cells. When your body needs energy, it releases the triglycerides. Your VLDL cholesterol [<https://medlineplus.gov/vldlcholesterol.html>] particles carry the triglycerides to your tissues.

Having a high level of triglycerides can raise your risk of heart diseases [<https://medlineplus.gov/heartdiseases.html>] , such as coronary artery disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/coronaryarterydisease.html>] .

What causes high triglycerides?

Factors that can raise your triglyceride level include:

- Regularly eating more calories than you burn off, especially if you eat a lot of sugar
- Being overweight or having obesity [<https://medlineplus.gov/obesity.html>]
- Cigarette smoking
- Excessive alcohol use
- Certain medicines
- Some genetic disorders
- Thyroid diseases [<https://medlineplus.gov/thyroiddiseases.html>]
- Poorly controlled type 2 diabetes [<https://medlineplus.gov/diabetestype2.html>]
- Liver [<https://medlineplus.gov/liverdiseases.html>] or kidney [<https://medlineplus.gov/kidneydiseases.html>] diseases

How are high triglycerides diagnosed?

There is a blood test that measures your triglycerides, along with your cholesterol. Triglyceride levels are measured in milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL). The guidelines for triglyceride levels are

| Category | Triglyceride Level |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Normal | Less than 150mg/dL |
| Borderline high | 150 to 199 mg/dL |
| High | 200 to 499 mg/dL |
| Very high | 500 mg/dL and above |

Levels above 150mg/dL may raise your risk for heart disease. A triglyceride level of 150 mg/dL or higher is also a risk factor for metabolic syndrome [<https://medlineplus.gov/metabolicsyndrome.html>] .

What are the treatments for high triglycerides?

You may be able to lower your triglyceride levels with lifestyle changes:

- Controlling your weight [<https://medlineplus.gov/weightcontrol.html>]
- Regular physical activity [<https://medlineplus.gov/howmuchexercisedoneed.html>]
- Not smoking
- Limiting sugar and refined foods
- Limiting alcohol
- Switching from saturated fats to healthier fats

Some people will also need to take cholesterol medicines [<https://medlineplus.gov/cholesterolmedicines.html>] to lower their triglycerides.

Start Here

- HDL (Good), LDL (Bad) Cholesterol and Triglycerides [<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cholesterol/hdl-good-ldl-bad-cholesterol-and-triglycerides>] (American Heart Association)
- High Blood Triglycerides [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/high-blood-triglycerides>]
 (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)
 Also in Spanish [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/es/health/high-blood-triglycerides>]
- Triglycerides: Why Do They Matter? [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-cholesterol/in-depth/triglycerides/ART-20048186?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
 Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/high-blood-cholesterol/in-depth/triglycerides/art-20048186?p=1>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Triglycerides Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/triglycerides-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
 Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-trigliceridos/>]

Related Issues

- Prevention and Treatment of High Cholesterol (Hyperlipidemia) [<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cholesterol/prevention-and-treatment-of-high-cholesterol-hyperlipidemia>] (American Heart Association)

Genetics

- Hepatic lipase deficiency: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/hepatic-lipase-deficiency>]
 (National Library of Medicine)

Statistics and Research

- Science Snippet: Lipids in the Limelight [<https://biobeat.nigms.nih.gov/2022/07/science-snippet-lipids-in-the-limelight/>]
 (National Institute of General Medical Sciences)
- Trends in Elevated Triglyceride in Adults: United States, 2001-2012
[\[https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db198.htm\]](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db198.htm) (National Center for Health Statistics)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Hypertriglyceridemia [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Hypertriglyceridemia%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Treatment with pempafibrate ameliorates fatty liver index and atherogenic lipid profiles... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40747315>]
- Article: Prevalence of hypertriglyceridemic-waist phenotype and its association with type 2 diabetes... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40741824>]

- Article: Impaired central sensitivity to thyroid hormone is associated with hypertriglyceridemia in... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40727912>]
- Triglycerides -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Hypertriglyceridemia%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Hyperlipoproteinemia+Type+IV%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- American Heart Association [<https://www.heart.org/en/>]
- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>] 

Patient Handouts

- Familial hypertriglyceridemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000397.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000397.htm>]
- Fibrates [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000789.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000789.htm>]
- Triglyceride level [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003493.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003493.htm>]
- VLDL test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003494.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003494.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

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- Triglyceride level [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003493.htm>]
- VLDL test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003494.htm>]

Related Health Topics

- Cholesterol [<https://medlineplus.gov/cholesterol.html>]
- Dietary Fats [<https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryfats.html>]
- VLDL Cholesterol [<https://medlineplus.gov/vldlcholesterol.html>]

The primary NIH organization for research on *Triglycerides* is the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
[<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>]

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