

## Courtesy of Genesys Health System

### What are triglycerides?

Triglycerides are the largest class of lipids found in body fat. A lipid profile detects the types and amount of fats circulating in your blood. The National Cholesterol Education Program guidelines for triglycerides indicate levels ranging from 200-499mg/dl are associated with risk factors for heart disease. Low levels of HDL (“good”) cholesterol, high levels of LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and obesity are other indicators for cardiovascular disease. High amounts of circulating triglycerides in the blood may also contribute to the thickening of the artery walls called atherosclerosis.

Changes in lifestyle habits are the main therapy for lowering triglycerides. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends to maintain a reasonable weight by cutting down on calories from fats, carbohydrates and alcohol and increasing physical activity.

### Triglyceride Lowering Tips

- Limit your use of refined carbohydrates such as white bread and simple sugars such as pop, candy, cookies and syrup because they may raise triglyceride levels and decrease HDL (“good”) cholesterol. Use “whole grain” bread with 3 or more grams of fiber per slice.
- Reduce the amount of cholesterol, saturated fats and hydrogenated fats/trans fat from your diet by limiting food sources like stick margarine, bacon, sausage, lunch meat, egg yolks, butter, creams, cheese, croissants, doughnuts, and fried foods.
- Substitute fish high in omega-3 fatty acids for meats high in saturated fat like hamburger. Fatty fish like mackerel, lake trout, herring, sardines, albacore tuna and salmon are high in omega-3 fatty acids. Other sources of omega-3 fatty acids (a polyunsaturated fat) include walnuts, flaxseed oil, and ground flaxseed.
- Use monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats – such as those found in canola oil, olive oil, avocado, nuts, soy oil, sunflower oil, peanut oil, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, and Miracle Whip or liquid margarine.
- Eat breakfast and consume smaller meals more frequently throughout the day.
- Include 25-30 grams of dietary fiber in your diet daily. Choose high fiber cereals with at least 3 grams of fiber per 1/2 cup serving instead of sweetened cereals.
- Reduce your intake of alcohol considerably. Even small amounts of alcohol can lead to large changes in lipid blood levels.
- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes every day.
- Control high blood pressure and avoid cigarette smoking to help decrease the risk of coronary artery disease.
- Patients should follow the specific plans laid out by their physician and dietitian. If drugs are used to treat high triglyceride levels, dietary management is still important.
- Check with your physician before taking fish oil supplements.

## Sample Meal Pattern

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### Breakfast

2 servings of whole grain bread/cereal  
1 serving fresh fruit  
2 servings mono/polyunsaturated fat  
1/2 serving of non-fat milk unsweetened beverage

### Lunch

1 serving protein  
2 servings of whole grain bread/starch  
1-2 servings of vegetables  
1 serving of fresh fruit  
2 servings mono/polyunsaturated fat  
1 serving non-fat milk

### Dinner

1 serving protein  
2 servings of whole grain bread/starch  
1-2 servings of vegetables  
2 servings of mono/polyunsaturated fat  
unsweetened beverage

### Snacks

1 serving of fresh fruit  
2 servings of mono/polyunsaturated fat  
1 serving of whole grain starch or non-fat milk equivalent  
unsweetened beverage

Sample Menu contains 1800 calories  
33% calories from fat  
46% calories from carbohydrate  
21% calories from protein  
Goal 30-35% calories from fat  
Less than 7% saturated fat calories

## Sample Menu

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### Breakfast

1 cup old fashioned oatmeal  
1/8 cup or 4 walnut halves  
Medium orange  
1/2 cup non-fat milk  
Herbal tea

### Lunch

2 oz. turkey sandwich on whole grain bread  
1 T. Miracle Whip  
Carrot sticks  
1/2 cup three bean salad  
Small apple  
1 cup non-fat milk

### Dinner

4 oz. fish fillet in a tomato based sauce  
1/2 cup brown rice  
1 /2 cup steamed broccoli  
1 slice whole wheat bread  
Tossed salad w/2 T. olive oil based Italian dressing  
Decaffeinated iced tea

### 3 p.m. Snack

1 oz. almonds  
(30 nuts)

### Bedtime Snack

1 cup fresh strawberries  
6 oz. lite yogurt

## Portions

### Protein

2-3 oz. cooked weight  
size of standard deck of cards  
or palm of a women's hand

### Vegetables

1/2 cup cooked or 1 cup raw

### Fat

1 tsp. oil or margarine  
5 grams of fat on label

### Fruit

1 medium piece  
size of baseball

### Starch

1 slice of bread  
1 oz. of dry cereal  
1/2 cup rice, pasta

### Milk

1 cup or 8 oz.