

# A focus on Triglycerides

## Maintaining a healthy level

Triglycerides are fatty compounds that are made by your body from carbohydrates and fats. They are essential for many functions, such as serving as a source of energy for your body.

But too many triglycerides in your bloodstream cause problems, such as increasing your risk of heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, and pancreatitis. High triglycerides levels may also result from genetic disorders that run in your family.

Health professionals measure your triglyceride levels by taking a sample of your blood after a period of fasting (nothing but water for 12 hours). Normal triglyceride levels range from 50mg/dL to 150mg/dL. If your levels are higher, your physician may recommend one of the following courses of action:

- 150mg/dL-199mg/dL (Borderline High): Limiting intake of sugar and refined carbohydrates (such as sweets, white bread, white rice), avoiding alcohol, and increasing physical activity.
- 200mg/dL-499mg/dL (High): Restricting your diet, eliminating alcohol, increasing physical activity, and controlling likely related disorders, such as obesity. Because of the higher levels, medication may be prescribed.
- Over 500mg/dL (Very High): Medication will most likely be prescribed. Dietary changes, stopping alcohol, and increased physical activity will also be prescribed.

### What can you do to maintain a healthy triglyceride level?

- Exercise regularly
- Lose weight
- Little or no alcohol
- Stop smoking
- Manage your stress
- Eat more vegetables
- Eat less sugar and simple breads
- Eat less total and saturated fat
- Eat more fiber and whole grains
- Medication (consult your physician)

For more information about triglycerides, contact your health care provider, your Conentra health specialist, or you can visit the American Heart Association's Web site at:

[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)



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