

triglycerides

When your blood cholesterol levels are checked at your doctor's office, you may also find out your triglyceride level. Triglycerides are fat. Most fat tissue is made of triglycerides, and when fat travels in the blood, it travels as triglycerides.

When Should I Be Concerned?

Researchers are not certain that high triglyceride levels are a risk factor for heart disease. However, most doctors will continue to recheck them if levels are high to see if they come down.

Usually, triglyceride levels less than 250 mg/dl are normal, but they may get as high as 1,000 mg/dl. If your triglyceride level is above 250 mg/dl, your doctor may prescribe a special diet.

What Can I Do?

High triglyceride levels may be a problem if you are overweight or if you are diabetic and your blood sugar is not controlled. Triglyceride levels may increase after eating, especially if you consume a lot of simple carbohydrates such as sugar, candy, or regular soda. They may also increase after drinking alcohol. If you have high triglyceride levels, you should try to change your eating and drinking habits. Substitute complex carbohydrates such as fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain breads for simple carbohydrates, and avoid alcoholic beverages.

Of course, you should discuss any questions with your doctor or dietitian, and be sure to follow their recommendations.

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