What Is It?

Triglycerides is another name for storage fat. Extra calories from any source – carbohydrates, fat, and protein – may be converted to this storage fat.

Why Is It Important?

High triglycerides (hypertriglyceridemia) can be determined by a fasting blood test and is usually performed when you have your cholesterol measured. An elevated triglyceride level is a risk factor for heart disease. It is sometimes associated with high blood pressure and diabetes.

How Often Should I Have It Checked?

Every 5 years if normal, and if elevated every 1-2 years or as desired by your doctor. Note: Persons losing weight are breaking down stored fat and may have temporarily high levels.

What Causes It To Be High?

- **Weight.** Being overweight is the most common cause of mildly elevated triglycerides.

- **Diet.** Too many calories, especially those from carbohydrates including sugar and also alcohol can raise triglycerides.

- **Family History.** If your parents or grandparents have or had high triglycerides, you should keep your levels checked.

- **Age.** Triglyceride levels usually increase as you age.

- **Medical Conditions.** Diabetes, hypertension, hypothyroidism, peripheral vascular disease, and kidney and liver disease are often linked with elevated triglycerides.

- **Medication.** Thiazide diuretics, beta blockers, and oral contraceptives can raise triglyceride levels.

What Can I Do To Lower Triglycerides?

- **Lose weight if you need to.** Even 10 pounds can help.

- **Exercise.** Aerobic exercise, like walking, running or biking, can lower triglycerides and help you lose fat.

- **Lower your fat intake.** Limit the fats you add to foods. Bake, broil, or grill instead of frying foods, and limit your intake of high fat meats and cheeses. Men should attempt 40-60 grams of fat per day; women 20-40 grams of fat per day.

- **Eat less sugar,** including table sugar, honey, syrups, cakes, cookies, pies, sodas and sweetened tea.

- **Reduce alcohol consumption.** Alcohol can increase the liver’s production of triglycerides.

- **Eat more fiber.** The “2 B’s” are your best sources: Bran & Beans. Whole grain breads and cereals, fruits and vegetables and peas are also high in fiber.

### Triglycerides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;150</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-199</td>
<td>Borderline high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥500</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.
For more information: [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncep](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncep)

Note: This educational information is not intended to substitute for expert health and medical advice or treatment. The information is designed to help you make informed choices about your health. Please consult your medical professional for questions or information that is specific to your medical condition.