



Control Your Cholesterol & Triglycerides

A blood test called a “lipoprotein profile” checks your blood cholesterol (lipid) levels. Too much LDL-cholesterol, other fatty deposits, and calcium can make plaque. This can clog the walls of the arteries and slow down or block blood flow to the heart or brain. Blocked arteries can cause a heart attack or stroke. Get your blood lipids tested, as advised by your doctor. Examples of lipid numbers are listed below.

Total Blood Cholesterol

200 (mg/dL)*

HDL (“good”) Cholesterol

This type helps remove cholesterol from the blood and helps prevent fatty buildup in the arteries.

40 mg/dL for a man*

50 mg/dL for a woman*

LDL (“bad”) Cholesterol

Too much of this type leads to cholesterol buildup in artery walls

100 mg/dL*

Triglycerides

150 mg/dL*

***Note:** Instead of target blood lipid numbers, your doctor will discuss treatment which may include medication, (such as a statin), based on:

- Your age, health conditions, and family history of premature cardiovascular disease (CVD).
- Your LDL-cholesterol.
- Your 10-year risk for CVD.

Ways to Reduce Cholesterol

- Take medications, if prescribed.
- Limit foods with saturated fats. Have no *trans* fats. These are hydrogenated oils in foods, such as stick margarine and some processed foods.
- Use salad dressings and margarines made with plant sterols and stanols (e.g., Benecol and Take Control brands.)
- Choose lean beef, pork, lamb, chicken, and turkey. Limit serving sizes.
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables (5 to 7 or more servings/day) and whole-grain products (6 or more servings/day).
- Have 31 to 38 grams of dietary fiber if you are a man; 21 to 25 grams a day if you are a woman.
- Eat fish 2 to 3 times a week (especially ones high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon).
- Use nonfat and low-fat dairy products.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
- Be physically active.

Ways to Reduce Triglycerides

- Lose weight if you are overweight. Follow a low-fat diet. Limit alcohol, sugar, and foods with sugar.
- Do regular exercise.
- Take medications, if prescribed.



Get more information from:

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
www.nhlbi.nih.gov