

How to Lower Triglycerides with Diet

Triglycerides are a type of fat found in your blood that can increase the risk of heart disease. If you've been told by your health care provider that your triglycerides are high, this article may help you reduce them with dietary changes.

What are triglycerides?

Triglycerides are a type of fat found in your blood. Triglycerides are not a fat you eat. Instead, your body makes triglycerides from what we eat and drink. Measuring the amount of triglycerides in the blood is one way to monitor your risk for heart disease.

Why are high levels of triglycerides a problem?

Too many triglycerides in the blood can lead to hardening and narrowing of the arteries. This can increase your risk for developing heart disease. This is why it is important to keep triglyceride levels in your blood at a healthy level.

What are some causes of high triglycerides?

There can be many causes of high triglycerides, including genetic factors, certain medications, and medical conditions like diabetes. Other causes can include:

- Carrying extra weight, especially around the waist.

- Eating a high calorie diet that is higher in fat and added sugar.

- Drinking high amounts of alcohol.

What can I do to keep my triglyceride level in check?

You can lower your triglyceride levels by making changes to what you eat and drink. Try the tips below:

Increase your intake of vegetables and fruit. Try to fill [half your plate](#) with vegetables and fruit at every meal.

Choose more plant-based foods like beans, legumes, nuts, seeds and tofu.

Eat less refined carbohydrates like white breads, rice and pasta. Choose [whole grain](#) options as much as possible.

Eat less foods with [added sugars](#) like sugary drinks, cakes, cookies, pastries, donuts, ice cream and candy bars. Read this article on [reducing sugar in the kitchen](#) for more tips. Don't forget to look for sources of hidden sugars found in processed foods like granola bars, cereal and yogurts.

Choose healthy fats. Healthy fats are found in fish, nuts, seeds, vegetable oils and more. Read this [article](#) to learn about the different types of fat found in food and which ones you should eat more and less of.

Limit your intake of saturated and trans fats. Check the [food label](#) to compare foods. Limit butter, fatty meats like sausages, marbled cuts of meat, chicken with the skin on and high fat dairy products like cream, cheese, full fat milk, and sour cream.

Decrease your [alcohol intake](#). If you drink, have no more than 3 standard drinks per day and 15 drinks per week if you're a man, and no more than 2 standard drinks per day and 10 drinks per week if you're a woman. If your triglycerides are very high, you may need to drink even less or avoid alcohol completely.

Other things you can do to help lower your triglycerides:

Be Active. Adding any amount of physical activity helps. Start now and slowly increase your activity levels at your own pace. Face physical activity challenges with these helpful suggestions to [get into the swing of being active](#). Be [physically active at work](#).

Try an omega-3 fatty acid supplement. Check with your health care provider before starting a higher dose omega-3 supplement to make sure it is safe and to find out how much you should take.

Speak to your [dietitian](#) or health care provider to find out what is healthy weight for you. If you are thinking of joining a weight loss program, consider this [checklist of questions](#).

How can a dietitian help?

A [dietitian](#) can give you specific suggestions on what changes you can make to your diet to help lower your triglycerides. Dietitians consider your medical history, lifestyle, culture and goals to create a personalized plan. [Connect with a dietitian today!](#)

Bottom line

Managing your blood triglycerides can help to lower your risk of heart disease. Eat more vegetables, fruits, plant-based foods and healthy fats, and be more active. Limit added sugars, refined carbohydrates, saturated fat, trans fat and alcohol.

You may also be interested in:

[Understanding Food Labels in Canada](#)

[Facts on Fats](#)

[All About Whole Grains](#)

[Cookspiration – Hundreds of Nutritious Recipes](#)

This article was written and reviewed by dietitians from Dietitians of Canada. The advice in this article is intended as general information and should not replace advice given by your dietitian or healthcare provider.