

Cholesterol and Triglycerides: What Are They?

Cholesterol and triglycerides are blood lipids. Cholesterol is wax-like and is used to make vitamin D, many hormones, and cell membranes whereas triglycerides are fat lipids used for energy between meals.

Cholesterol

We get the majority of our cholesterol from our body. That's right! Your liver is constantly making all the cholesterol you need, but we also consume it when we eat animals and their products.

High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL)

HDL is your good cholesterol! Its job is to take other lipids to the liver for disposal. In other words, your HDL helps clear out the LDL from your body.

Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL)

High LDL or bad cholesterol increases your risk for heart disease and stroke because it likes to stick together and cause blockages in arteries and veins.

Triglycerides

Triglycerides come from the fat we consume and are used by our body for energy. Also, when we consume too many calories, our body stores them as triglycerides in fat cells. Healthy triglyceride levels are needed for basic body functions, but our risk for heart disease and stroke increases when they are too high.

Healthy Levels

HDL: Men ≥ 40 mg/dL Women ≥ 46 mg/dL Optimal range for all: ≥ 60 mg/dL

LDL: ≤ 130 mg/dL Optimal range for all: ≤ 100 mg/dL

Triglycerides: ≤ 150 mg/dL

How to Affect Your Lipids

- Move - our body will use the lipids we have stored. The best movement is the one you enjoy.
- Reduce saturated fats - use olive and avocado oil instead of butter.
- Eat Soluble Fiber - fiber slows down absorption into our bloodstream. Soluble fiber can be found in citrus, apples, carrots, beans, lentils, and more.
- Increase Omega 3s - a healthy fat found in salmon, mackerel, herring, sardines, walnuts, and flaxseed.
- Consume more plant proteins - beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, tofu, etc.
- Stop smoking and or reduce alcohol consumption.