

Lowfat Diet for Persons with Very High Blood Triglyceride Levels

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General Goals

The spreading waistline most of us develop during middle age is the result of excess fat accumulating under our skin. However, some people have too much triglyceride (the chemical name for simple fat) in their blood, which may increase the chances of developing an inflammation of the pancreas. One very effective way to decrease very high blood levels of triglyceride is to decrease dietary fat consumption.

Most fat in our diets is easily recognized. For example, all shortenings and oils consist primarily of fat. Corn oil is more than 80% fat, as are olive oil, butter, and lard.

However, not all the fat in our diet is obvious, and it's important to be aware of hidden sources of extra fat, such as gravies, cream sauces, and salad dressings. Fats are also commonly used as lubricants in foods, and as a means of improving the flavor of many dishes.

Since both saturated and polyunsaturated fat can raise your blood triglyceride levels, intake of both types of fat should be kept to a minimum. Saturated fat is found in the milk and meat of animals, while polyunsaturated fat comes from vegetables.

You do *not* have to limit your intake of carbohydrates (sugars and starches), unless your doctor feels you should lose weight.

Your goal is to eat no more than 25 to 35 g of fat each day. Keeping the following facts in mind may help you reach this goal: A 6 oz. sirloin steak contains 20 g of fat, while the same amount of broiled fish (with lemon) contains only 10 g. A pat of margarine or butter has 4 g of fat and a glass of whole milk, 8 grams. Coffee with cream contains 2 g of fat.

Specific guidelines

Butter and margarine

Use as little butter and margarine as you can. Think of these as being 100% triglycerides.

Oils

Use little or no olive oil and other vegetable oils, including corn and safflower oils and shortening. Don't use salad dressings containing oils.

Gravies and sauces

Avoid gravies containing fat and cream sauces. Make gravies from meat drippings the containing juice without fat. Cook with bouillon, tomato juice, lemon, vinegar, wine, onion, garlic, spices, and herbs.

Meat, fish, and fowl

Trim all visible fat from red meats (lamb, pork, beef) before they are cooked. You may use these only three times a week and are portions must

be small (5 oz. or less uncooked). Use fish, including shellfish and water-packed salmon and tuna, and white meat of chicken and turkey as your main sources of protein. Remove and throw away the skin and yellow fat from all poultry before it is cooked. Don't eat frankfurters or luncheon meats.

Bread

You may have four slices of bread or one muffin or biscuit each day (for a total of four to 5 g of fat). Dry cereals are also acceptable.

Milk and milk products

Skim milk, lowfat cottage cheese, and eggs are finding and are also good sources of protein. You may use powdered nondairy creamers (without palm or coconut oils) in coffee or tea.

Vegetables

Fresh and frozen vegetables can be eat and as desired. However, make sure any vegetables you eat when away from home have not been cooked with butter or margarine.

Pasta

You can eat normal portions of rice, macaroni, noodles, and spaghetti.

Desserts and snacks

Most baked goods contain large amounts of fats, as do corn chips, potato chips, chocolate chips, and most cookies. However, pretzels, matzoh, saltines, and graham crackers contain very little fat. Jello, hard candies, pudding prepared with skim milk, angel food cake, and fruit are all good desserts.

Processed foods

Read the labels of processed foods. Most state the fat content; if a serving contains more than 5 g of fat, the product should be avoided.

Other foods

Jam, jelly, honey, and pickles are not restricted.

Alcohol

You should have no more than one or two alcoholic drinks each week. Be very wary of drinking alcohol when you eat any foods containing moderate or large amounts of fat, since this combination can cause your triglyceride levels to shoot up very high.