13 Scientifically-Proven Ways to Optimize Your Triglyceride and Cholesterol Levels Naturally

When was the last time you went out to dinner with family or friends? At that table, you can say with almost complete certainty that at least one of them had high LDL cholesterol, high triglycerides, or both.

Sorry to ruin your dinner, but we cannot ignore the fact that:

- Nearly 1 in every 3 Americans have high LDL cholesterol.
- Almost 1 in every 3 Americans have above normal triglyceride levels.

Why does this matter? Because both high LDL and triglyceride levels are risk factors for the leading cause of death in the world – heart disease.

There is, however, plenty of good news that is hiding behind these disheartening statistics. To find the silver lining, we need a deeper understanding of triglycerides, cholesterol, and heart disease.

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What's The Deal With Cholesterol, Triglycerides, and Heart Disease?

At first glance, they seem like entirely different entities.

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that occurs naturally in all parts of the body. It floats around the blood

bringing essential nutrients like fat-soluble vitamins and fatty acids to cells and get cleaned up by LDL receptors in the liver when the job is done.

Triglycerides, on the other hand, are the most energy dense molecule that provides our cells with energy and is stored in fat cells when we have enough energy.

Heart disease is the culmination of cell damage, inflammation, and plaque buildup that occurs in the blood vessels. This disease process can lead to a heart attack, chest pain (angina), or stroke.

How could cholesterol, triglycerides, and heart disease possibly be related? They don't seem to have anything in common (yet). Let's look a bit closer at what happens when things go wrong to find out how they are linked.

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The Intimate Link Between Triglycerides, Cholesterol, and Heart Disease

Heart disease is a complex issue with many causes, but we do know one of the mechanisms that causes the damage, inflammation, and plaque build up that is characteristic of heart disease. This mechanism begins with a form of LDL cholesterol, which is called small, dense LDL, that can easily be damaged and cause harm to the cells that make up the blood vessels.

In response to the harm that the damaged LDL particles cause, the immune system activates and inflammation levels increase. The inflammation increases the chance that more small, dense LDL particles become damaged and destroy even more cells that

line the blood vessels.

To prevent the damage from getting out of hand, the immune system neutralizes the damaged LDL particles and turns them into plaque. This mechanism of heart disease explains why high LDL and chronic inflammation increase the likelihood of heart disease, but what about triglycerides?

Let’s look at what happened before the small, dense LDL particles started circulating in the blood. As the LDL was being formed, one important factor determined which form of LDL it became – triglycerides. In fact, studies have confirmed that high triglycerides lead to the creation of more atherogenic LDL particles.

To sum up all of this complex biochemistry in one sentence: high triglyceride levels lead to the creation of more potentially atherogenic LDL cholesterol, which increases the risk of heart disease significantly.

Luckily, you can lower your triglycerides and optimize your cholesterol levels in one foul swoop by following these 13 simple suggestions.

13 Ways to Lower Your Triglycerides Naturally

1. Remove All Refined Sugars From Your Diet

Studies have found that each additional daily serving of sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with a 2.25 mg/dL increase in triglyceride levels, as well as increases in insulin resistance, LDL cholesterol, and systolic blood pressure and a decrease in HDL cholesterol.

Luckily, the exact opposite is true as well. When you remove

all sugar-sweetened beverages from your diet, you will improve your cholesterol and triglyceride levels significantly. If you take it one step further and remove all added sugar from your diet, you will be on the fast track to good health.

Related: *Healthy Alternative Sugars and More*

2. Focus On Weight Loss

For those who are overweight or obese, a weight loss of 5% to 10% usually results in a 20% decrease in triglycerides, a 15% reduction in LDL-C, and an 8% to 10% increase in HDL-C. That is a win-win-win-win situation for your health.

One of the quickest ways to lose weight is by eliminating all processed foods from your diet and replacing it with whole foods. Have delicious detox cranberry lemonade instead of fruit juice or soda. Instead of fast food for lunch, make this surprisingly delicious salad

3. Stop Drinking Alcohol

Based on the data from many studies on alcohol consumption and triglycerides, it is estimated that the ingestion of 1 oz of alcohol per day corresponds to a 5% to 10% higher triglyceride concentration than found in nondrinkers. If you have high triglycerides, it is best to abstain from alcohol completely.

4. Eliminate All Trans Fats

Trans fatty acids are found in all partially and fully hydrogenated oils. They consistently cause significant increases in triglycerides and atherogenic LDL cholesterol levels, which increases cardiovascular disease risk dramatically. Stick to natural fats from nuts, olives, avocado, coconut, fish, meat, and dairy.

5.Establish a Sleep Schedule

One way to improve cholesterol, triglycerides, and energy levels at the same time is by prioritizing sleep. Make sure you are sleeping at around the same time every night and getting enough sleep (7-9 hours).

If you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, turn off all lights and electronics at-least 30 minutes before bedtime and meditate. By doing this, you will increase melatonin and decrease stress levels, making it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep throughout the night. Follow the same meditation and sleep schedule every week to wake up feeling more refreshed and healthier each morning.

6. Eat More Fiber

In seven studies that compared high fiber diets and low fiber diets, triglyceride levels decreased by 8% in the high-fiber groups. The same pattern emerges even when the high fiber diet contains many more carbohydrates than a moderate-carbohydrate low-fiber diet.

What does this mean for you? Eat more high-fiber plant foods like vegetables and your body will thank you.

Related: *Start Eating Like That and Start Eating Like This – Your Guide to Homeostasis Through Diet*

7. Exercise

Many studies have found that the most active people have the lowest fasting triglyceride levels. For example, men who jogged for 10 miles a week had a 20% lower fasting triglyceride level than sedentary men, while men with even higher activity levels (>20 miles of jogging weekly) had the lowest mean fasting triglyceride level (~86 mg/dL).

The good news is that if you are not a fan of jogging, you can

get results from walking as well. Studies on overweight people with higher triglyceride levels experienced triglyceride reductions (of about 26%) after walking at a brisk pace for 12 miles each week. To get these results, all you have to do is walk for about 30 minutes at a brisk pace every day.

Not a fan of walking either? Bring an audiobook or podcast with you to make it more enjoyable.

8. Include Nuts In Your Diet

Nuts provide a concentrated dose of fiber and healthy fats, which work together to lower blood triglycerides and improve cholesterol.

An analysis of 61 studies on the effects that nuts have on our health showed that each serving of tree nuts decreased triglycerides by 2.2 mg/dL. Other epidemiological studies found that you will get the greatest health benefits if you consume between 3–7 servings of nuts per week.

9. Increase Your Omega 3 Intake

Studies have found that consuming around 4 g of marine-derived omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids per day can decrease triglyceride concentrations by 25% to 30%. Because of these findings, the American Heart Association recommends getting 2 to 4 g of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) plus docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) per day for people with high triglycerides. This recommendation can be met by taking a fish oil supplement or eating 2 to 4 3-ounce servings of wild caught (not farm-raised) sardines or salmon.

Another important thing to mention is that there is a particular reason why “marine-derived” omega 3s are mentioned, rather than other types of “plant-derived” omega 3s. This is because non–marine-based omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids from foods like walnuts, canola oil, and flaxseeds have not

demonstrated a consistent reduction in triglycerides like marine-derived DHA and EPA.

Related: ***How to Reverse Fatty Liver Disease (With Diet Plan)***

10. Supplement With Niacin

This natural B vitamin has been shown to reduce triglycerides by 20-50% and increase "healthy" HDL cholesterol levels. However, it is important to take niacin as a part of a natural b-complex supplement for best results.

Related: ***Mental Health, Physical Health & B Vitamins – Nature's Valium***

11. Eat More Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCTs)

Yes, you read that correctly. To improve cholesterol and triglyceride levels, you should consume more triglycerides. But make sure they are the medium-chain kind of triglyceride.

MCTs are different from the long chain triglycerides that we commonly find in dairy and meat because MCTs skip the normal process of fat digestion and go straight to the liver. In the liver, the MCTs are often converted into ketones for fuel.

For this reason, many studies have found MCTs to increase weight loss when compared to other healthy fats like olive oil. MCTs also have been found to decrease triglycerides more than olive oil as well.

Coconut oil is the best natural source of MCTs (and despite the bad press, it provides us with many health benefits). However, if you need an unmistakable energy boost that will improve your health more rapidly, then supplement with pure MCT oil. Use it as the oil for your salad dressings or blend it into your smoothies.

12. Use More Garlic

Garlic has potent anti-inflammatory properties that can help improve cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Garlic extract's triglyceride and cholesterol-lowering effects continue to be confirmed in several animal studies.

13. Supplement With Curcumin

Curcumin is an anti-inflammatory compound that is found in turmeric. It has been found to have many powerful effects on the body from improving brain health to relieving chronic pain.

One of turmeric's benefits is blood triglyceride reduction. In fact, A 2012 study found that a low dose of curcumin can cause a significant drop in blood triglycerides.

Putting It All Together

Improving triglyceride and cholesterol levels is simple. By doing so, you can prevent and reverse heart disease.

For the best results:

- Eliminate all processed foods to improve health and increase fat loss.
- Implement a sleep schedule and improve sleep quality.
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes a day.
- Supplement with marine-derived omega 3s, curcumin, niacin, and/or garlic extract.
- Eat more MCTs from coconut oil or an MCT oil supplement.
- Avoid alcohol, trans fats, and added sugar.

Recommended Reading:

- *Start Eating Like That and Start Eating Like This – Your Guide to Homeostasis Through Diet*
- *Lower Cholesterol and Prevent Heart Disease Without*

Drugs
- *How to Detoxify and Heal the Lymphatic System*
- *Holistic Guide to Healing the Endocrine System and Balancing Our Hormones*
- *Candida, Gut Flora, Allergies, and Disease*

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