

High Lipids—What Is It?

“My doctor said my lipids are high. Should I be worried?”

Lipids are fats found in your blood. Cholesterol and triglycerides are two types of lipids. You may have either high cholesterol, high triglycerides, or both. Here's what you need to know.

What is high cholesterol?

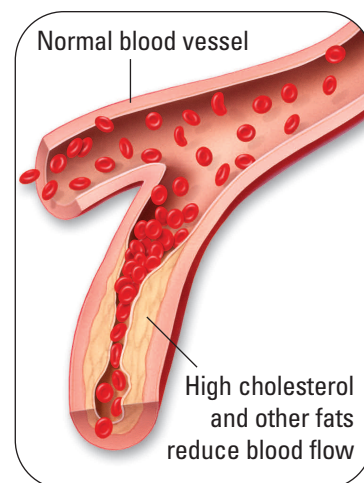
Your body needs some cholesterol, but you can have too much. When you have too much cholesterol, it can build up on the walls of your blood vessels and lead to heart disease.

What are high triglycerides?

Your body stores triglycerides for later use as energy. When you have too much fat, it can build up on the walls of your blood vessels and lead to heart disease.

Why are lipids dangerous?

- Blood brings needed oxygen to your heart.
- When blood vessels, like arteries, get blocked by lipids, it is hard for blood to move through the blood vessels.
- If an artery in the heart gets completely blocked, then your heart does not get the oxygen it needs.



“Am I at risk for heart disease?”

Along with high lipid levels, there are many other risk factors for heart disease. As the chart shows, many of these risk factors can be controlled.

Risk Factors You Cannot Control	Risk Factors You Can Control
Age – You are a man 45 or older – You are a woman 55 or older	High cholesterol and triglycerides
	High blood pressure
Family History – Your father or brother had heart disease before age 55 – Your mother or sister had heart disease before age 65	Diabetes
	Being overweight
	Cigarette smoking
	Lack of exercise

Taking care of high lipids every day

Talk to your doctor about the changes you can make to lower your lipids and your risk of heart disease.

- Follow a heart-healthy diet that is low in fat.
- Start a regular exercise program.
- If you smoke, ask about ways you can quit.
- Try to lose weight and keep it off.
- Take your medicine as directed.

Use a goal checklist. Set goals that you are ready to reach.