

# IN THE KNOW ABOUT NUTRITION

Volume: 2019 Issue: 11

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## Elevated Triglycerides



Whenever the blood work results come in, I am sure that your doctor has mentioned your triglyceride (TG) levels. Often, we hear the numbers or that they are high, but we have no idea

what to do with that information. Therefore, oftentimes we do nothing. The normal range for TG is <159 mg/dL and anything that is >200 mg/dL, would be considered elevated or high TG. Having an elevated TG number could be an indicator of excess body fat or an increased risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. Also, high TG levels tell your doctor that you may be eating too many calories from refined grains or items with added sugar (i.e. Sodas). Luckily, fixing that high TG number can mostly be done through a healthy diet and lifestyle.

### Is fat really evil?

The answer is not all fat is evil and they do not all cause the increase in TG. Fried foods or foods made with saturated fat (anything solid at room temperature), are the fats that can lead to damages inside your body. Good fats, such as unsaturated fats and omega-3's, are liquid at room temperature. Here are some examples: olive oil, salmon, chia seeds, soybean oil, and tuna.

### A Closer look:

Chia seeds are a member of the mint family and are ancient grains that were a part of the Aztec diet.



Chia seeds contain more than just omega-3's (good fats), they also have 10 g of fiber per 2 TBSP and they have protein. Chia seeds may help improve TG levels, lower blood pressure, and reduce LDL (bad cholesterol).

### Should we go Coo Coo for Coconuts?

Every 3 in 4 Americans believe that coconut oil is a healthy alternative for lards and butter, but only 1/3 of nutrition experts agree. Why? Coconut oil has a higher amount of saturated fats and this could increase your blood cholesterol levels. In terms of your TG, studies are unable to clearly state whether coconut oil is all that it is cracked up to be, but we do know that polyunsaturated fats (i.e. olive oil) can have health-promoting benefits.



### Time to spill the tea:

There are lots of different cultures and individuals that turn to tea for sore throats, stomach aches, or on a cold Texas day based on traditions or beliefs.

Luckily, tea can provide some health benefits beyond the traditional comforts (no I am not talking about Texas Sweet Tea made with cane sugar). Black tea, for instance, has been shown to have antioxidative properties (prevent organ tissue damage). Therefore, black tea has been associated with decreased LDL and TG and promotes higher levels of HDL (good cholesterol).

### Let's get down to business:

A modest weight loss or a weight loss of 5-10% of starting weight can possibly increase insulin sensitivity and have better blood glucose control. Having better control of diabetes or losing some of that excess body fat can have a positive impact on TG and cholesterol. It is important to note that each person's body is different and they may see different benefits or sometimes just minor results.

### A Closer look:

The term Metabolic Syndrome may be something that you have heard of or maybe you deal with it now, so here are some thoughts to consider preventing or managing Metabolic Syndrome. In short, it is a combination of different diseases (abdominal obesity, hypertension, and diabetes). Often, a person may see altered lipids like high TG and LDL and low HDL. Experts say that with 7-10% weight loss, there is some evidence that symptoms of Metabolic Syndrome can be reduced. Physical activity with a balanced diet is the safest way to lose weight healthily. This does not mean you need to go run a marathon or become an Olympic heavyweight champion. Experts say that light, moderate, or high-intensity workouts for at least 30 minutes most days can show improvement in glucose control, normal lipid levels, and healthy weight loss.

There is not a magic pill or easy method to reach healthfulness overnight, but with little improvements here and there, you can see results both on the scale, in the blood work, and helpful mentally as well.

### References:

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### Berry and Walnut Breakfast Bowl

- ½ c low-fat Greek vanilla yogurt
- 2 TBSP chopped walnuts
- 1/3 c blueberries
- 1/3 c strawberries
- 1 TBSP chia seeds

#### Nutrition Analysis:

~330 kcal/serving  
11 g Fat  
40 g Carbohydrate (note that carbs are from yogurt and fruits)  
18 g Protein

