



# SEVERE HYPERTRIGLYCERIDEMIA

Very high triglyceride levels in the blood that increase the risk of pancreatitis and other serious health problems.

## OVERVIEW



Severe hypertriglyceridemia is typically defined as triglycerides (TG) levels  $\geq 500$  mg/dL and especially  $\geq 1,000$  mg/dL. It can be due to genetic conditions, medical conditions, medications, and lifestyle factors.

## KEY FACTS

- ✓ TG 500–999 mg/dL = severe
- ✓ TG  $\geq 1,000$  mg/dL = very severe
- ✓ Risk of pancreatitis rises significantly when TG  $\geq 1,000$  mg/dL
- ✓ Levels can fluctuate based on diet, medications, and health conditions

## COMMON CAUSES



Genetic lipid disorders (FCS, MCS)



Obesity & metabolic syndrome



Type 2 diabetes



High carbohydrate/high fat diet



Alcohol



Medications (e.g., steroids, estrogens, retinoids, beta blockers)



Kidney disease, hypothyroidism, pregnancy, other conditions

## POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS



- Often no symptoms
- Abdominal discomfort or pain
- Nausea
- Bloating
- Eruptive xanthomas (small bumps on skin)
- Lipemia retinalis (milky appearance of blood vessels in the eye)
- Pancreatitis (severe cases)

## HEALTH RISKS



- Acute pancreatitis
- Chronic pancreatitis
- Cardiovascular disease
- Fatty liver disease
- Poorly controlled diabetes

## MANAGEMENT: LOWER TRIGLYCERIDES, LOWER RISK



### HEART-HEALTHY, LOW-FAT, LOWER SIMPLE CARBOHYDRATE DIET

Focus on whole foods, lean proteins, healthy fats, fruits, vegetables and high-fiber foods.



### REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week.



### AVOID OR LIMIT ALCOHOL

Alcohol can dramatically raise triglyceride levels.



### MEDICATIONS

May include fibrates, omega-3s, niacin, statins (if indicated), and other therapies.



### TREAT UNDERLYING CONDITIONS

Control diabetes, thyroid disease, kidney disease, and other contributing factors.



### WORK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

A lipid specialist or dietitian can help create a plan that works for you.



Work with your healthcare team to identify the cause and create a plan to lower triglycerides and reduce your risk.

### IMPORTANT:

If TG levels are  $\geq 1,000$  mg/dL, seek medical attention promptly to reduce the risk of pancreatitis.

Numbers to know: Normal TG  $< 150$  mg/dL | Borderline high 150–199 mg/dL | High 200–499 mg/dL  
Severe  $\geq 500$  mg/dL | Very severe  $\geq 1,000$  mg/dL