

Meal Planning Tips for Managing High Triglycerides

Client Name _____ Date _____

Dietitian / Dietetic Technician _____

Phone _____ Email _____

This handout provides goals, tips, and resources to help you create a healthy, well-balanced daily meal plan.

Calorie Control

- Weight management helps keep your triglyceride levels in a healthy range. To manage your weight, stay within your daily calorie limits.
- To meet your calorie goals, limit portion sizes.
- Think carefully about portion size when you eat desserts and snack foods. These can be very high in calories. Enjoy them in small amounts.
- Remember that you get extra calories when you add sauces, gravy, salad dressings, mayonnaise, and other toppings to foods.

Vegetables and Fruits

- Have 2 to 3 cups of vegetables and 1 cup of fruit each per day.

Protein

- Have a lean source of protein at two or more meals each day. Aim for 5 to 6 ounces per day.
- Good choices include fish, poultry without skin, lean beef, lean pork, and lean veal.
- You can also have eggs and nonfat or low-fat cheese.
- Try vegetarian protein foods, such as dried beans, veggie burgers, and tofu.
- Each week, eat two servings of fatty fish. You can have salmon, tuna, mackerel, or sardines. These fish provide omega-3 fatty acids, which are heart-healthy fats.

Carbohydrates

- Your body needs carbohydrates for good health. However, eating too many carbohydrates can raise your triglycerides.
- Foods with carbohydrates include starches (pasta, bread, potatoes, corn) and grains (rice, oats, barley, wheat). To limit the carbohydrates that you eat to the right amount, use no more than one quarter of your plate for these foods.
- Look for carbohydrate foods that have at least 2 grams fiber per serving. Whole grain foods are usually high in fiber. Choices include brown rice, whole wheat bread, whole grain cereals, whole wheat pasta, barley, and oats.



This handout may be duplicated for client education.

Nonfat or Low-fat Dairy Products

- Aim for three servings per day. One serving is 8 ounces of milk or yogurt.
- Servings can be divided among meals and snacks.
- Good choices include nonfat (skim milk) and nonfat or low-fat yogurt.

Heart-healthy Fats

- Monounsaturated fats and omega-3 polyunsaturated fats are good for your heart's health.
- Choose nuts, avocado, olives, or olive oil to get monounsaturated fat.
- Use canola, soybean, or walnut oil to get omega-3 fatty acids.
- Avoid saturated fats. These fats are found in high-fat foods from animals, such as some cuts of meat, lard, butter, and dairy foods that are not fat-free.
- Avoid trans fats (in any food that lists “partially hydrogenated oil” as an ingredient).

Healthy Beverages

- Water is important to your health—and calorie-free!
- Fruit juices and milk are good sources of some nutrients and can be included in a healthy meal plan. However, juice has sugar and calories, and whole milk is high in fat and calories. Drink juice in limited amounts, and choose nonfat or low-fat milk instead of whole.
- Beverages sweetened with noncaloric sweeteners (such as diet soft drinks) are better choices than sugar-sweetened drinks or alcohol. Regular soft drinks, beer, wine, and liquor are high in calories and lack nutrients that your body needs.

Additional Resources

- **Portion Distortion Web site** (<http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/portion>): Information about how portion size affects calorie content.
- **Tips for Eating Smart** (<http://www.restaurant.org/dineout/nutrition.cfm>): Tips from the National Restaurant Association on watching calories when eating out.
- **Delicious Decisions Web site** (<http://www.deliciousdecisions.org>): Information about heart-healthy meal planning from the American Heart Association.