

The logo for 'ask' is presented in a stylized, lowercase font. The letters are orange with a white outline and are set against a blue, spherical background that has a gradient and a white highlight at the top. A registered trademark symbol (®) is positioned to the upper right of the 'k'.

**ask<sup>®</sup>**

**ABOUT  
HIGH CHOLESTEROL  
AND HIGH TRIGLYCERIDES**



## Because the more you know, the healthier you can be.

This booklet is designed to help you understand high cholesterol and high triglycerides (called lipids or blood fats) and the things you can do every day to manage them and reduce your risk for heart disease.

As always, talk to your doctor for more information.\* Taking your medicine as directed by your doctor is one of the most important things you can do. If you are like most people, this may be easier said than done.



\*The term "doctor" is used throughout this booklet to represent your healthcare provider and also includes nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

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## 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?

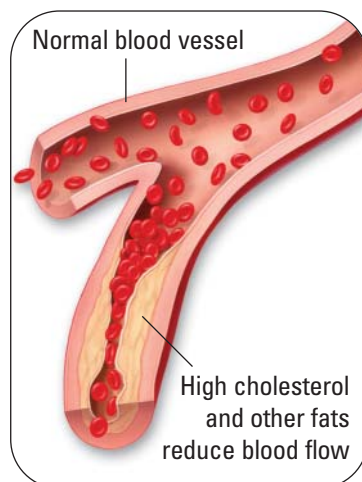
Your body needs some cholesterol, but you can have too much. When you have too much cholesterol, it can build up on the walls of your blood vessels and lead to heart disease.

### 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
<b>Age</b> – You are a man 45 or older – You are a woman 55 or older	High cholesterol and triglycerides
	High blood pressure
<b>Family History</b> – 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.*



## My Numbers—Ask About Each One

Total Cholesterol	What It Means
Less than 200	Good
200-239	Somewhat high
240 and above	High

LDL Cholesterol	What It Means
Less than 100	Very good
100-129	Good
130-159	Somewhat high
160-189	High
190 and above	Very high

HDL Cholesterol	What It Means
60 and above	May protect against heart disease
Less than 40	Major risk factor for heart disease

Triglycerides	What It Means
Less than 150	Normal
150-199	Somewhat high
200-499	High
500 and above	Very high

\*From the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

Keep track of your lipid numbers in the chart below. Compare your numbers to the chart on the left. Ask your doctor what your goal numbers should be.

	Date	Result	Goal
Total Cholesterol			
LDL Cholesterol			
HDL Cholesterol			
Triglycerides			

- **Total cholesterol** is the amount of all cholesterol in your blood. The higher the number, the greater your risk for heart disease. Your doctor may want you to lower this number.
- **LDL cholesterol** is the "bad cholesterol" that sticks to your blood vessels and blocks blood flow. Your doctor may want you to lower this number.
- **HDL cholesterol** is the "good cholesterol" that prevents cholesterol from sticking to your blood vessels. Your doctor may want you to raise this number.
- **Triglycerides** is a type of fat that is carried through the blood. High levels may be a sign of heart disease. Your doctor may want you to lower this number.

## My Lipid Goals—What Are They?

You are the most important person in managing your lipid numbers. Talk with your doctor to help you choose one or more goals you are ready to work on now.

### Goal 1



#### Diet

- I will eat a heart-healthy diet that includes less \_\_\_\_\_ and more \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will keep track of what I eat.
- I will try to lose \_\_\_\_\_ pounds by next visit.
- I will drink less alcohol.

### Goal 2



#### Exercise

- I will exercise for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes \_\_\_\_\_ days per week, if my doctor tells me it is safe.\*
- My doctor and I agree that the best activities for me are \_\_\_\_\_.
- If I notice chest pain, shortness of breath, or chest tightness, I will get emergency help.

### Goal 3



#### Stop Smoking

- I will ask my doctor about ways I can quit smoking.
- I will think of all the reasons why I should quit and then take the steps to quit.
- If I start to smoke, I will try to quit again.

\*Some medical conditions may make exercise dangerous for some people. Before starting any exercise program, talk to your doctor.

### Goal 4



#### Medicine

- I will take my cholesterol medicine(s) as directed.
- I will call my doctor if I have problems.
- I will ask questions when I do not understand.

### Goal 5



#### Know My Numbers

- I will have my levels checked as directed by my doctor.
- I will reach my cholesterol goals:  
Total cholesterol \_\_\_\_\_  
LDL cholesterol \_\_\_\_\_  
HDL cholesterol \_\_\_\_\_  
Triglycerides \_\_\_\_\_

### Goal 6



#### Doctor Visits

- I will keep my doctor appointments even when I feel fine.
- I will ask my doctor questions when I do not understand something.

### Goal 7



#### Asking for Help

- I will ask for help when I need it.
- I will let my doctor know if I feel sad or blue.

#### **EMERGENCY:**

Get emergency medical help right away if you think you are having a heart attack  
1) Chest pain or discomfort; 2) Upper body (ie, shoulder, arm, or jaw) discomfort;  
3) Shortness of breath; 4) Cold sweats, nausea, or light-headedness



## Lipid-Lowering Medicines— How Do They Work?

A healthy lifestyle may not be enough to lower your lipids. Your doctor may also ask you to take medicines. There are different types of lipid-lowering medicines. Each one works in a different way to manage your lipids.

**Not every medicine is right for everyone. For complete information, including possible side effects and how the medicines you take affect each other, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.**

Over time, you may need more than one kind of medicine to manage your lipids. It may take a while before the medicine takes effect. Even when you reach your lipid goals, you may need to continue taking your medicine for a long time.

### Statins

- Slow down the cholesterol made in your body.
- Mainly, lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and may increase HDL (good) cholesterol.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your medicine)

### Cholesterol absorption inhibitors

- Slow down the way your body absorbs cholesterol.
- Often given with statins to lower LDL (bad) cholesterol even more.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your medicine)

### Resins (also called bile acid sequestrants)

- Lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and may be given with statins.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your medicine)

### Niacin

- Lower triglycerides and LDL (bad) cholesterol, and increase HDL (good) cholesterol.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your medicine)

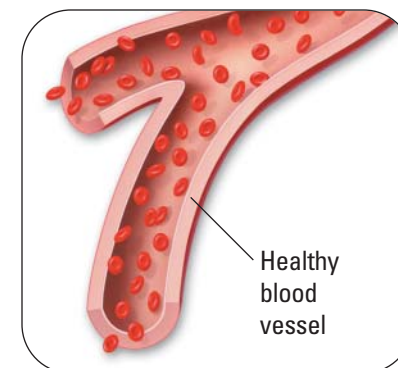
### Fibrates

- Lower triglycerides and may increase HDL (good) cholesterol in some cases.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your medicine)

### Omega-3 acid ethyl esters

- Contain Omega-3 essential fatty acids, which are “good” fats that your body needs for good health (but cannot make on its own).
- Lower triglycerides.



\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your medicine)

*Fill out a medicine chart with the help of your doctor.*



## My Medicines—How Can I Get the Most From Them?

Fill out the medicine chart below for all the medicines you take. This will help you know how, when, and why you take each medicine. Make sure you know the name, exact shape, color, and any words on your medicine.

				What My Pill Looks Like	Dates to Refill Rx	Special Instructions

- Mark medicine refill dates on a calendar.
- Use reminder notes to remember to take your medicines.
- Stick with your medicine, even when you reach your lipid goals. Without medicine, your lipid numbers may go up again.
- Always talk to your doctor before making any changes to your medicine schedule.







## Sticking With My Medicines— What Will Work?

Taking your lipid-lowering medicine as directed by your doctor is one of the most important things you can do to manage high cholesterol or triglycerides.

### *Not taking your medicine as directed by your doctor means:*

- Your medicines may not work the way they should.
- You may be at risk for serious health problems, like a heart attack or stroke.
- Your bad cholesterol and triglyceride numbers may stay the same or go up; your good cholesterol number may stay the same or go down.



### “Taking medicine gets in the way of my day.”

Taking more than one medicine at different times each day can be hard. The key is to create a routine that fits your life.

### *Here are some useful tips:*

- Where possible, take your medicines with other daily habits, like in the morning when brushing your teeth or in the evening with dinner.
- Ask if your medicines should be taken with or without food.
- Ask your doctor if your medicine should be taken in the morning or at bedtime.
- Ask your doctor if there are medicines you can take less often. An easier schedule may help you.

### *If you sometimes forget to take your medicines:*

- Use a pill box marked with the days of the week. Take it with you when you are away from home.
- Wear a watch. Set an alarm. Leave yourself a note on the bathroom mirror.
- Keep your medicine in a place where you will see it every day.
- Fill out a medicine chart or calendar. Keep it with you all the time.



### *If you forget to refill your medicine on time:*

- Plan ahead for refills so that you do not run out of your medicine. For example, mark a calendar with “Refill on [date].” Choose a date about a week before you will run out.
- Make sure you have enough refills to last you until your next doctor visit.
- Ask your pharmacy to send you reminders to refill your prescription.



*To learn more about what may be getting in the way of taking your medicines, go to [www.takingmeds.com](http://www.takingmeds.com).*





## My Doctor Visits— How Can I Get Ready?

You and your doctor are a team in managing your high cholesterol or triglycerides. To get the most from your treatment, talk openly and honestly with your doctor.

“*I am embarrassed to ask my doctor some questions.*”

- All questions are important. Do not be afraid to speak up if you do not understand something.
- Ask a family member to join you for doctor visits. They can write down your doctor’s answers.
- In general, many patients who take niacin will have a side effect called flushing (skin turns red and warm). Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about flushing and what you can do about it.

*If you have trouble understanding what your doctor says:*

- Ask for written information about your medicine. Is it available in large print or another language?
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to help you answer the following questions.

*Side effects may occur with any medicine. Tell your doctor about any side effects you may have or have had in the past. You should first talk with your doctor if you decide to stop taking your medicine.*

### Questions to Ask My Doctor or Pharmacist:

- What is the name of the medicine and how will it help me?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How and when do I take the medicine, and for how long?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- When and how do I refill my prescription?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What do I do if I miss a dose?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Will other nonprescription or prescription medicines affect my lipid-lowering medicine?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How will I know if my lipid-lowering medicines are working?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are the possible side effects? What should I do if they occur?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Managing High Lipids— Where Can I Go for Help?

“ *I need help. I cannot do this on my own.* ”

- Ask a family member or friend to support you, like going with you to your next doctor visit.
- Ask your doctor to help you start a heart-healthy diet. Your doctor may refer you to a dietician.

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### *If you have trouble paying for your medicines:*

- Visit [www.togetherrxaccess.com](http://www.togetherrxaccess.com), [www.gskforyou.com](http://www.gskforyou.com), or [www.PPARx.org](http://www.PPARx.org) for more information.
- For help with Medicare, call 1-800-Medicare or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

### *Have you felt down or hopeless?*

It is normal for people with heart disease to feel down from time to time. But if you have been feeling down much of the time, talk to your doctor.

Some of the Web sites above are external to GlaxoSmithKline. GlaxoSmithKline does not have editorial control over the content of the information provided in these Web sites and therefore does not guarantee their accuracy and completeness.

Eating right can help lower your lipids. Choose fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, chicken, and low-fat milk products. A dietician can help you make a heart-healthy meal plan that may include:

Foods	Servings
– Fruits and vegetables	– 5 or more each day
– Grains, like bread, cereal, rice, pasta	– 6 or more each day
– Fat-free/low-fat dairy milk products	– 2-4 each day
– Lean meats and poultry (no skin)	– Up to 6 ounces each day
– Fish, like salmon	– 2 servings, baked or grilled each week
– Nuts and seeds	– Small amounts
– Good fats from canola, corn, olive, safflower, and soybean oils, instead of butter and margarine	– Ask your doctor how much fat you should have in your diet

# Where Can I Go to Learn More?

*For more help and information, contact one or more of these resources:*

## American Heart Association (AHA)

1-800-AHA-USA-1 (1-800-242-8721)

[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

## National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Information Center

1-301-592-8573

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

## Delicious Decisions

[www.deliciousdecisions.org](http://www.deliciousdecisions.org)

*To learn more about what may be getting in the way of taking your medicines, take the ASK Survey. Go to [www.takingmeds.com](http://www.takingmeds.com).*

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