



LIPID PANEL RESULTS EXPLAINED



GLUCOSE is the main sugar found in the blood and our primary source of energy. However, high fasting glucose levels may be an indication of more serious issues, including diabetes. Normal fasting Glucose should be between 70-110 mg/dL. Values that fall outside of this range should be shared with your primary care provider in a timely fashion.

CHOLESTEROL is a naturally occurring fat in your blood that is an essential nutrient for many body functions. High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease, which is the number one killer of women and men in the United States. The lipid panel measures the total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol and the risk ratio.

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL: Total cholesterol is a measure of all forms of cholesterol in your blood. This includes HDL, LDL, and trace amounts of other cholesterol found in the blood. Normal levels should be below 200 mg/dL.

LDL CHOLESTEROL: This is also known as the bad cholesterol because it tends to build up on arterial walls, which increases your risk for heart disease and strokes. Normal levels are 0 to 100 mg/dL.

HDL CHOLESTEROL: This is the protective, or good cholesterol, that helps keep cholesterol from building up in the arteries by returning it to the liver for breakdown. Normal values are between 39-96 mg/dL, but being on the higher end of normal is beneficial.

RISK RATIO: The risk ratio is your Total cholesterol/HDL cholesterol. For women, the ratio should be 4.5 or less, and for men, the ratio should be 5.0 or less. Your risk for developing coronary artery disease increases as your ratio increases.

TRIGLYCERIDES are another form of fat that the body produces and uses for energy. High levels are associated with obesity, coronary artery disease, insulin resistance, and diabetes. Normal fasting levels should be between 30-200 mg/dL. Triglyceride levels change frequently throughout the day and noncompliance with ALL of the fasting guidelines may affect this test.



TIPS ON LOWERING CHOLESTEROL

- Avoid tobacco. Smoking lowers levels of HDL "good" cholesterol and is a major risk factor for heart disease.
- Get Moving. In addition to lowering LDL "bad" cholesterol, regular physical activity can raise HDL "good" cholesterol by up to 10%.
- Go Fish. Fish and fish oil are filled with cholesterol-lowering omega-3 fatty acids.
- Get Smart. Read the product labels and lean towards foods lower in saturated fats (<20g/day), cholesterol (<200mg/day), sodium (<1500-2300mg/day) and trans fats. Avoid coconut and palm oils as well as high fat dairy products, and alcohol.
- Opt for complex carbohydrates found in whole grains, fruits, vegetables and legumes that are low in calories and high in fiber. Eat more water-soluble fiber such as that found in oat bran and fruits.
- The top cholesterol lowering foods are: whole grains, blueberries, fish, olive and flaxseed oil, almonds, pistachios, walnuts, avocado, olives, 100% Cranberry Juice, black soybeans, pomegranates, and yogurt with live active cultures.
- Utilize Medication. Medications are sometimes necessary to regulate cholesterol levels and it is important to discuss all options with your primary care provider.