

Lipids—a term often used interchangeably with cholesterol—is short for lipoproteins. They function in your bloodstream, as one doc colorfully described it “as molecular level trucks to carry fats wherever required or stored.” On the way, LDL (low density lipoprotein) tends to drop its fat load into the walls of our arteries, causing blockages. HDL (high density lipoprotein) is the sweeper, carrying LDL out of the bloodstream and straight to the liver, where it can be processed properly. *You want high levels of HDL and low levels of LDL.* Triglycerides, another fat, indicate inflammation in your blood stream. Lipids and trigs are monitored together because they are key indicators of heart attack risk. Below are general goals. *Set yours with your doctor.*

LIPIDS GOALS

Total 150 - 200

HDL > 55

LDL < 70-100

Trigs < 150

LIPIDS RATIO (formula: Total ÷ HDL)

Lowest risk < 2.9

Low 3.0 - 3.6

Moderate 3.7 - 4.6

High 4.7 - 5.6

Alarming > 5.7

Why bother to keep your own lipids log if it sits in your medical records?

Lipids blood tests may be ordered by your attending hospital/cardiologist and your PCP. Though I request that lab results be sent to both, sometimes that does not happen. So, my MEDICAL NOTEBOOK record ensures that my numbers are always at hand during appointments and emergencies. Furthermore, my handy log illuminates trends, alerts me to big changes, and deepens my understanding of my body and medicine.

Set up the LIPIDS section of your MEDICAL NOTEBOOK

Behind the LIPIDS divider, insert a couple of 3-hole-punched, double-sided copies of the log on page 2. Cut and paste the above goals onto the inside of the divider for easy reference. Under “Notes” scribble meds adjustments, the name of the facility that drew your blood, or confessions of holiday excess. Details may matter.

How long to hold onto these logs?

I keep 3 to 4 pages of current logs in my MEDICAL NOTEBOOK. The old logs I file for a year in case they are needed for comparison. When I graduated to a heart transplant, I happily tossed all those old records from the years of heart failure.

Please continue to page 2 for your your lipids log.

