



ICOSAPENT ETHYL

What is icosapent ethyl?

Icosapent ethyl (IPE) is a highly purified form of omega-3 fatty acid fish oil available as a prescription medication. IPE is different from the fish oil supplements you can buy over-the-counter because it is a highly purified and contains a higher concentration of omega-3 fatty acid, EPA. Research studies have not shown cardiovascular benefit with use of fish oil supplements containing a combination of omega-3 fatty acids (DHA & EPA).

Why should you lower triglycerides?

High triglyceride levels in your blood can increase your risk of:

- Heart attack, stroke, death from heart disease
- Pancreatitis (abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting)

You may be able to lower your triglycerides by:

- Reducing fat and added sugars in your diet
- Avoiding alcohol
- Cardiovascular exercise, resistance training, and weight loss

For some people, these changes may not be enough to lower triglycerides and medications to help lower triglycerides may be recommended by their healthcare provider.



Triglyceride value	Classification	Increased Risk of
Below 150	Normal	
150-199	Elevated	Heart disease / stroke
200-499	High	Heart disease / stroke
500 or higher	Very High	Pancreatitis

How is icosapent ethyl taken?

Icosapent ethyl is a prescription medication usually taken as 2 capsules twice a day with meals. It can be taken at the same time as most other medications.

Icosapent ethyl should be taken alongside a low-fat and low-cholesterol diet. Your provider may refer you to a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) to help you plan a heart-healthy diet.

Which patients might take icosapent ethyl?

Icosapent ethyl may be prescribed to you by your healthcare provider to reduce:

- triglycerides and risk of pancreatitis if your triglycerides are 500 mg/dL or higher.
- risk of cardiovascular events if your triglycerides are between 150-499 mg/dL while taking other cholesterol-lowering medications, like a statin.

Adding icosapent ethyl to statin therapy has been shown to reduce the risk of major heart attack, stroke, and death from heart disease.

What to expect when starting icosapent ethyl?

Icosapent ethyl is well tolerated but some people may experience the following side-effects:

- Constipation or upset stomach
- Swelling of the feet
- Atrial fibrillation in some patients
- Possible allergic reaction if you are allergic to fish or shellfish.

Your healthcare provider may order blood work before starting IPE and will ask you to repeat these in a few months to monitor your blood levels of cholesterol and triglycerides.