

# About statins



If you have any concerns about your medications or questions about your prescriptions, please call us immediately.

**Provide office contact info here**

Date:

Patient name:

## What are statins?

Statins are a cholesterol-reducing medicine used to help prevent heart attacks and strokes. While the benefits of lowering your cholesterol are not easy to see right away, they are important in the long run. **Taking a statin today** cannot only lower cholesterol, but also can reduce the existing plaque that has built up over time, leading to better health outcomes in the future.

## Statins prevent heart disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. More than 600,000 Americans die of heart disease each year – one in every four deaths.<sup>1</sup> Stroke is another leading cause of death – more than 795,000 people in the U.S. have a stroke each year.<sup>2</sup>

## You are being prescribed a statin for:

### ☐ Cardiovascular condition

A statin can help prevent heart and blood vessel diseases, such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Statins also help you avoid a future heart attack or stroke.

### ☐ Diabetes

People with diabetes often have high cholesterol and an increased likelihood of heart attack or stroke. The statin you were prescribed can help you avoid future complications.

### ☐ High cholesterol

Statins are the No. 1 medication for reducing high LDL (bad) cholesterol. High cholesterol can lead to severe cardiovascular conditions if not maintained.

### ☐ Other/Prevention

Even people without high cholesterol are often prescribed a statin. Statins also reduce plaque that has built up over time and may be prescribed for longer-term prevention.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Keep taking your statin as prescribed

If you are worried about taking your statin, here are some important things to know.

- **Even if your cholesterol is normal, statins lower the risk of heart disease and heart events.** There may already be plaque in your arteries that increases your risk for heart disease.
- **Statins do more for your arteries than just lower cholesterol.** Research indicates that statins can help reduce the risk of narrowed arteries by keeping the smooth muscle lining of the arteries healthy.<sup>3</sup>
- Studies show that, in certain people, **statins can reduce the risks of heart attack, stroke and heart disease by about 22 percent.**<sup>1</sup>

## Know the facts about common side effects

Like other medications, there are risks of side effects from taking a statin, including:

- **Muscle weakness (myopathy) in the shoulders, upper arms, thighs or pelvis.** This is the most common side effect of taking a statin. Your doctor may suggest switching you to a different dose/type of statin if pain persists. Do NOT stop taking your medicine until you've talked to your doctor.
- **Upset stomach, gas, constipation, diarrhea or abdominal pain or cramps.** These side effects are usually mild to moderate and lessen with time.
- **Headache, rash or upper respiratory infection.** These side effects are also usually mild to moderate and lessen with time.

**These side effects are very uncommon but do require immediate medical attention:**

- **Muscle soreness, pain, fever, nausea, vomiting or brown urine.** These side effects could be a sign of rhabdomyolysis, a serious condition that damages muscle tissue. If you experience any of these side effects, call your doctor.
- **Liver problems.** Only 2 percent of people taking statins experience these rare side effects.

***If you have taken a statin before and experienced side effects, please let us know. We may be able to switch you to another statin with a lower risk of side effects.***

<sup>1</sup>CDC: Deaths: Final Data for 2009. [www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr60/nvsr60\\_03.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr60/nvsr60_03.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/282929.php>

<sup>3</sup><http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1074248407300380>

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