

Drugs for cholesterol: statins

This handout describes statins, which are used to lower your cholesterol level. It also offers tips for taking them and lists side effects.

Change your lifestyle

- Eat a heart healthy diet
- Exercise for a healthy heart
- Lose weight

Do you need to take drugs to lower your cholesterol

- If your LDL cholesterol is 130 or more
- If your LDL cholesterol is 100 or more and
 - Heart attack or heart surgery
 - Diabetes or high blood sugar
 - High blood pressure
 - Smoker
 - Low HDL cholesterol level
 - Family member has heart disease
 - Your doctor says you are at risk for heart problems

Circle the drug you take

- Circle the drug you take
 - Fluvastatin (Lescol)
 - Atorvastatin (Lipitor)
 - Lovastatin (Mevacor)
 - **Pravastatin (Pravachol)**
 - Simvastatin (Zocor)
 - Rosuvastatin

Tips for taking statins

- Most statins are taken at night
 - Atorvastatin (Lipitor) can be taken at any time of the day
 - Lovastatin (Mevacor) should be taken with meals
- Do not drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit
- Stop taking the drug right away if you are pregnant

Get your blood checked

- 6 weeks after you start a statin
- Then again in another 6 weeks
- Then once every 6 months

Side effects

- Stomach upset
- Liver problems
 - You may need to get a blood test every 6 months
- Sore muscles and also feel very tired or have a fever
 - Stop taking the drug and call your doctor

The content in this letter is intended as general information and may not apply to you or your condition. Talk to your doctor about how to best use this information and how to take care of your medical condition. This information is not intended to provide or replace professional medical advice or services.
