

## Drugs for Cholesterol: Bile Acid Sequestrants

This handout describes bile acid sequestrants, which are used to help lower your cholesterol level. It covers 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 drugs to help lower your cholesterol

- If your LDL cholesterol is 130 or more
- If your LDL cholesterol is 100 or more (ask your doctor) 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

- Cholestyramine (Questran)
- Colestipol (Colestid)
- Colesevelam (WelChol)

### Tips for taking bile acid sequestrants

- Take just before meals
- Take other drugs or vitamins 1 hour before or 4 hours after you take your cholesterol drug
  - Be very careful if taking with
    - Vitamin A, D, E, or K
    - Warfarin or Coumadin
    - Thyroid hormone drugs (ask your doctor)
- You can mix it with applesauce, soup, or canned fruit
- You can mix it with a fiber laxative like psyllium seed or Citrucel if it makes you have hard stools (ask your doctor)

### Side effects

- Hard stools or constipation
- Bloating or gas