

Department of Nephrology/Pharmacy

Cholesterol lowering medicines (statins)

Examples

The following are some examples of brand names of statins:

- Simvastatin
- Atorvastatin
- Pravastatin
- Fluvastatin

What are statins and what do they do?

Statins are used to lower cholesterol in the blood. If you have too much cholesterol in your blood, you are at risk of heart disease or stroke.

It is particularly important to maintain low blood cholesterol levels if you have kidney problems as people with kidney problems are at a higher risk of having problems with their heart and of developing heart disease or suffering with a heart attack or stroke.

Why am I prescribed a statin?

You have been prescribed a statin by your doctor because the cholesterol level in your blood is higher than recommended. By taking the statin, your cholesterol level will hopefully fall to the recommended level.

It is important that you also try to follow a healthy low-fat diet and try to take some exercise.

How do I take my statin tablets?

Statins are usually taken at night. Your doctor might change your dose after a blood test to get your blood cholesterol just right. Always follow the instructions on the label about the number of tablets to take.

Do I need to have any tests or be monitored because I am taking a statin?

You will need to have regular blood tests whilst taking a statin to monitor your cholesterol level and also your liver, as occasionally statins can cause the enzymes in your liver to change. You will need blood tests every three months when you start on a statin but less frequently (every six to twelve months) once you have been taking the tablets for some time.

Are there any side effects?

Statins can make you feel sick at first but this often stops after a few days. Tell your doctor if it is a problem for you.

When you start taking your statin you might notice side effects for a short time such as:

- Headaches
- Sleeping problems
- A rash
- Pains in your chest
- Unexplained loss of hair

Tell your doctor if you have any strange effects from taking your statin.

Special warnings or precautions you need to be aware of:

Tell your doctor **straight away** if you:

- Get muscle pain or weak muscles as very occasionally statins can cause muscle problems.
- If you feel generally unwell or if you notice your skin has turned yellow as very occasionally statins can cause problems with your liver.

Are there any problems taking statin tablets with any other medications or foods/drinks?

Avoid drinking grapefruit juice if you are on Simvastatin as this can increase the risk of side effects.

Only take tablets prescribed for you by your doctor and check with your pharmacist before taking any new medicines.

Further information

Further information about your tablet can be found in the patient information leaflet found in the tablet/capsule box or on the container.

If you have any other questions about your medication, please contact the medicines helpline on 01223 217502.



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Arabic

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Cantonese

如您需以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے کی درخواست کریں: 01223 216032 یا patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Bengali

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Document history

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