

Statins (Cholesterol lowering medicines)

Information for Patients

Statins is the name given to a group of medicines.
The name of your statin is

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Why has my doctor given me a statin?

Statins are used when a low fat diet has failed to reduce the amount of cholesterol in the blood. They have also been shown to reduce the risk of further problems developing with your heart or circulation.

Check with your doctor if you are still not sure why you need a statin.

How do they work?

They reduce the amount of cholesterol in the blood. Cholesterol is a fat which can clog the blood vessels and therefore reduce blood flow to the heart. If the blood vessels in the heart are blocked, this is a heart attack

How should I take my statin?

Always follow the instructions on the label. It is important that you continue to follow a low-fat diet. Statins are best taken at night just before bedtime. Do not stop taking this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

Take it as soon as you remember. If it is nearly time for the next dose, do not take the one you missed. Take the next dose at the usual time. Do not double up the next dose.

What are the side effects of statins?

All drugs have side effects but most people will not experience them.

The following can occur in some people:

- constipation, diarrhoea, or flatulence (wind)
- feeling sick
- headaches
- jaundice or abdominal pain
- sleep disturbances
- depression

If you notice any of these problems discuss them with your doctor, however they should wear off as your body adjusts to the medicine.

If you experience any of the following effects, stop taking this medicine and tell your doctor immediately. These side effects are rare:

- muscle pain, muscle tenderness or muscle weakness.

Can I take other medicines while taking statins?

Yes, but some other medicines may affect how statins work. It is important that you check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines including ones that you buy over the counter.

This leaflet is not intended as a substitute for any advice that your doctor, nurse or pharmacist may give you.

More detailed information can be obtained from the manufacturers information leaflet.

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