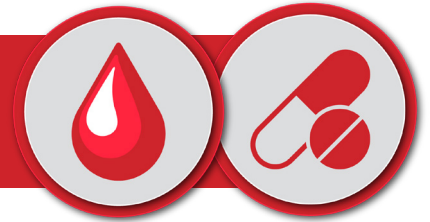




American Heart Association®

Reduce Your Risk

WHAT ARE CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING MEDICATIONS?



If you and your doctor decide together that you need to take medicine to reduce your high LDL (bad) cholesterol number, it's because you're at risk for heart attack or stroke. Usually the treatment plan combines healthy lifestyle changes including diet and physical activity, and medicine.

What type of medicine may I be prescribed?

Various medications can lower LDL cholesterol numbers. By working together, you and your doctor can decide the best treatment plan for you.

- **Statins (HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors)** Doctors typically first prescribe statins. Statins prevent the production of cholesterol in the liver, which effectively lowers LDL cholesterol numbers. Some names are lovastatin, pravastatin, simvastatin, fluvastatin and atorvastatin.
- **Ezetimibe (cholesterol absorption inhibitors)** Prevents cholesterol from being absorbed in the intestine. It's the most commonly used non-statin agent.
- **PCSK9 inhibitors** are breakthrough LDL lowering drugs. There are two forms: Monoclonal Antibodies and Small Interfering RNA (siRNA).
 - The monoclonal antibodies type bind to and inactivate a protein in the liver to lower LDL cholesterol. Some names include alirocumab and evolocumab.
 - The siRNA types work differently and lowers LDL numbers by stopping the liver from producing PCSK9. The available siRNA is called inclisiran.
- **Adenosine triphosphate-citrate lyase (ACLY) inhibitors** work in the liver to block the production of cholesterol. They are used in combination with lifestyle changes and statins to further decrease LDL cholesterol numbers in adults with

hereditary high cholesterol and people with heart disease who need to further lower their LDL numbers. Some names are bempedoic acid, and bempedoic acid and ezetimibe.

- **Bile acid sequestrants** cause the intestine to get rid of more cholesterol. Some names are cholestyramine, cholestipol and colesevelam.

The following medicines are triglyceride-lowering drugs and have mild LDL-lowering action, but data does not support their use as an add-on to statins.

- **Fibrates** are especially good for lowering triglyceride (blood fat) numbers' and have a mild LDL-lowering action. Some names are gemfibrozil, clofibrate and fenofibrate.
- **Niacin (nicotinic acid)** is a vitamin B that limits the production of blood fats in the liver. Take this only if your doctor has prescribed it. It lowers triglycerides and has mild LDL-lowering action.



Your doctor will work with you to decide which medicine, or combination of medicines, is best for you. Always follow your doctor's instructions carefully, and let the doctor know if you have any side effects or if you feel that the medication is not working. **Don't stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor.**

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