

# ConsumerRx<sup>®</sup>

## Statins and Cholesterol

### What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a soft, waxy substance found in the lipids (fats) in your bloodstream and in all the cells of the body. It is important for the function of your cells.

### Where does cholesterol come from?

Your body makes good and bad cholesterol. Additionally certain fats (saturated and ‘trans’ fats) found in food can add bad cholesterol to your bloodstream.

### What is “Bad” Cholesterol?

LDL is a lipid (fat) particle that carries cholesterol to the body including the arteries. This is why cholesterol in LDL (LDL-C) is often called the “bad” cholesterol.

### What is “Good” Cholesterol?

Cholesterol in HDL (HDL-C) is usually on its way out of the arteries so it is called “good” cholesterol.

### What are statins?

Statins are a group of medications that when taken daily can help lower “bad” cholesterol, or LDL-C levels in the blood. They help lower cholesterol in the arteries and help prevent heart attack and stroke.

### How do statins differ?

All statins work in the same way to help lower bad cholesterol. Statins are often grouped by their ability to lower cholesterol.

### What are my statin options?

When trying to figure out which statin is best for you, your doctor will test your cholesterol levels to know how much LDL-C lowering is needed to get to your goal. Please use the table below to discuss options with your doctor. Medications in bold are preferred/formulary.

<b>% You Need to Lower Your Cholesterol</b>	<b>Statin Name &amp; Strengths</b>	<b>Cost per Month*</b>
<b>less than 35%</b>	<b>simvastatin</b> (Zocor <sup>®</sup> ) 5mg, 10 mg	<b>\$5 - \$7</b>
	<b>pravastatin</b> (Pravachol <sup>®</sup> ) 10 mg, 20 mg, 40 mg	<b>\$7 - \$10</b>
	<b>lovastatin</b> (Mevacor <sup>®</sup> ) 10 mg, 20 mg, 40 mg	<b>\$8 - \$18</b>
<b>35% - 39%</b>	<b>simvastatin</b> (Zocor <sup>®</sup> ) 20 mg	<b>\$6</b>
	Lipitor <sup>®</sup> 10 mg	\$93
	Lescol XL <sup>®</sup> 80mg	\$97
<b>40% - 52%</b>	<b>simvastatin</b> (Zocor <sup>®</sup> ) 40 mg, 80 mg	<b>\$6</b>
	<b>Crestor</b> <sup>®</sup> 5 mg, 10 mg	<b>\$92</b>
	Lipitor <sup>®</sup> 20 mg, 40 mg	\$93
	Vytorin <sup>®</sup> 10 mg/10 mg, 10 mg/20 mg	\$97
<b>greater than 52%</b>	<b>Crestor</b> <sup>®</sup> 20 mg, 40 mg	<b>\$92</b>
	Lipitor <sup>®</sup> 80 mg	\$95
	Vytorin <sup>®</sup> 10 mg/40 mg, 10 mg/80 mg	\$97

\*Approximate cost estimates based on a 30-day supply. Actual prices may vary depending on your pharmacy and the amount or strength of medication dispensed. Bold medications are preferred/formulary

### **What are the possible side effects from statins?**

Many patients have muscle pain, soreness or even weakness on a statin. Most of the time these symptoms are mild and go away on their own. If you have severe symptoms and they don't go away tell your doctor. Rarely, statins may also irritate the liver. Side effects are similar among statins, although changing from one statin to another sometimes reduces or eliminates side effects. **For patients at risk for a heart attack, benefits outweigh the risk of potential side effects.**

### **Do I have to take a statin everyday?**

Statins work only while you take them. After just a couple of days without them, their benefits go away. If you have a problem with your statin, talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist right away.

### **Why are Lipitor and Vytorin not on the Preferred Medication List?**

Lipitor and Vytorin are good medications, but Crestor is as safe and effective and less expensive.

### **What else can I do to help control my cholesterol?**

You can start with a healthy diet that limits saturated fats and cholesterol. You can exercise regularly, control your weight and blood pressure. Finally, if you are a smoker, it is important that you stop as soon as possible. Smoking hurts arteries, lowers "good" cholesterol and increases chances of blood clots.

### **THE BOTTOM LINE**

Statins may not improve the way you feel now, but the benefits will pay off in the future by lowering your chance of having a heart attack or stroke. **You will get the best value from generic simvastatin (Zocor), pravastatin (Pravachol) or lovastatin (Mevacor). Crestor provides the best safety, effectiveness and value for the brand-name medications.**

*Note: Since many medication options are available, our physicians and pharmacists developed this to provide you with information about the available alternatives, as well as potential advantages and lack of advantages of the various products. This medication summary was developed based upon an evaluation of information from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), scientific studies, and input from practicing doctors and specialists.*

