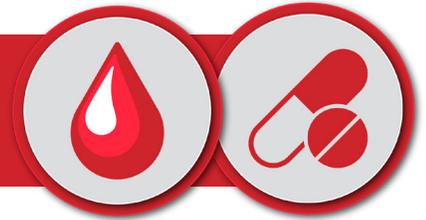




American Heart Association®

Reduce Your Risk

## WHAT ARE CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING MEDICATIONS?



If you and your doctor decide together that you need to take medications 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, with medication.

### 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, also known as HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors**, prevent the production of cholesterol in the liver, which effectively lowers LDL cholesterol numbers. Statins continue to be the first medication recommendation to lower LDL cholesterol.
- **Ezetimibe, also known as cholesterol absorption inhibitors**, prevent cholesterol from being absorbed in the intestine. They are the most commonly used non-statin medications to lower LDL cholesterol.
- **PCSK9 inhibitors, also known as proprotein convertase subtilisin/kexin type 9 inhibitors**, are LDL-lowering medications that help the liver remove more LDL cholesterol from the blood.
  - The monoclonal antibodies type lower LDL cholesterol by binding to a protein made in the liver and may also have effects outside the liver. 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.
- **ACLY inhibitors, also known as adenosine triphosphate-citrate lyase 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 are triglyceride-lowering medications 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 can help lower triglycerides, increase HDL, and may mildly lower LDL.



Your doctor will help decide which medication or combination is best for you. Follow instructions carefully, and tell your doctor about any side effects or if it's not working. **Don't stop taking your medications without talking to your doctor.**

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