



American Heart Association®

Check. Change. Control.
Cholesterol™

CHOLESTEROL DRUGS

PEOPLE WITH HIGH CHOLESTEROL are often prescribed medications by their doctors to help lower their cholesterol. The most common cholesterol-lowering drugs are called **statins**.

Statins disrupt the production of cholesterol by blocking a specific enzyme inside cholesterol-producing liver cells. This results in less cholesterol being released into the bloodstream.

Some statins also reduce the inflammatory process caused by elevated cholesterol within blood vessel walls. When the body has a reduced reaction to the invading cholesterol, fewer macrophages are allowed to travel into the artery walls, where they would have formed foam cells and plaque.

When plaque stops growing inside an artery, the fibrous outer coating remains strong and less likely to rupture. This is called a **stable plaque**.

Statins help to lower cholesterol and maintain the integrity of arteries.

Statins interrupt cholesterol assembly within the liver cells, reducing cholesterol output from the liver.

More LDL (bad cholesterol) returns to the liver to be digested.

SOME STATINS:

Reduce smooth muscle cell changes

Reduce friction in bloodflow

Stabilize the endothelium

Reduce inflammatory cells inside plaque

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Learn more about cholesterol at heart.org/Cholesterol