

We hear a lot about lowering our cholesterol by eating healthy and exercising. But sometimes that's not enough. That's when statins come in.

Statins are medicines that reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, which are two of the leading causes of death in the United States.¹ These medicines keep the liver from making cholesterol and help it get rid of cholesterol in the blood.

Statins can help if you have high cholesterol, heart disease, or if you're at high risk for heart disease or stroke. Things that can increase your risk include smoking, high stress, having diabetes or high blood pressure, a family history of heart disease or stroke, or being overweight. Even if you don't have high cholesterol, taking a statin may still help lower your risk.



WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF STATINS?

These are the names of common statins and where you can find them on the SCAN Formulary. Most SCAN members pay \$0 for these medications on the SCAN formulary.

(Note: The SCAN Formulary and the Formulary tiers are subject to change, especially from year to year. Prescription benefits may vary by plan, pharmacy type, days supply, and/or Part D benefits stage.)

Statin	Formulary Tier
Atorvastatin (Lipitor®)	Tier 1
Lovastatin (Mevacor®)	Tier 1
Pravastatin (Pravachol®)	Tier 1
Simvastatin (Zocor®)	Tier 1
Rosuvastatin (Crestor®)	Tier 1

Statins can also be combined into one pill with other cholesterol-lowering and blood pressure drugs but may have higher copays. If you have questions about these combination pills and their copays, please talk to your pharmacist.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Leading causes of death. National Center for Health Statistics. Updated October 25, 2024. Accessed May 7, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/leading-causes-of-death.htm>

Q How does a statin work in my body?

A High levels of bad cholesterol (LDL) can build up in your arteries, which can lead to heart problems. Statins help lower this bad cholesterol and also help your liver remove any extra cholesterol, keeping your heart and blood vessels healthier.

Q Do I need to take a statin if I don't have high cholesterol?

A Even if your cholesterol is normal, you may still be at high risk for a heart attack or stroke. Diet and exercise might still not be enough to lower your risk if you:

- Are a current or former smoker
- Are overweight
- Have a lot of stress
- Have a family history of heart attack or stroke
- Have a condition like diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease

That's why it's important to share your medical and family history with your doctor and ask if statins will help you.

Q What if I've already tried a statin but didn't like the side effects?

A Most people don't have side effects when taking statins, but a small number of people feel muscle pain. Serious muscle problems are rare. In general, the overall benefits of statins outweigh the risks of possible side effects.

If you're having side effects from your statin medication, it's important to let your doctor know before you stop taking it. Tell him or her about the other medications you're taking—the side effects might be coming from a bad interaction between your other medications and the statin.

Your doctor will be able to tell you if a different statin or the same statin at a lower dose might work better.

Q Do I need to take a statin if I'm already taking a different medication for my cholesterol?

A Statins are recommended for most people over other cholesterol medicines. Statins are one of the few cholesterol medicines that have been directly associated with preventing heart attack and stroke or death related to heart attack or stroke.

Q How long will I need to be on a statin?

A Statins are usually needed long term so you may be on the medication for the rest of your life.

If you have any questions about statins, please talk to your doctor or pharmacist.