

High Cholesterol Drugs Statins

With the growing number of new drugs, it's more difficult to decide which medication best fits an individual's needs. And, with a wide variation in the cost of drugs used to treat the same medical problem, such as lowering cholesterol, it's hard to judge whether a higher priced drug is better or not.

There are many statins used to lower LDL cholesterol, which is associated with a lower risk of heart disease and stroke. These drugs are also called HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors. They work by reducing how much fat or lipids are in your blood. If you and your doctor decide that taking a statin is the best choice to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, you still need to decide which one to take.

Rising costs of drugs concern all of us. High prices affect you whether paying cash, paying with private insurance, or paying taxes for health services. Knowing the most effective and least costly drugs can cut costs.

Not all drugs are available as a generic. Many drugs are patent protected and sold only as a brand name. Only lovastatin is available generically at this time. If your prescription is not available generically, ask if an alternative generic drug may be appropriate for you.

High Cholesterol (Statins) Drugs

<u>Brand Name</u>	<u>Generic Name</u>	<u>Generic Available</u>	<u>Average Price for 30-day Supply</u>
Lipitor		No	\$116
Lescol		No	\$75
Lescol XL		No	\$92
Altoprev ER		No	\$100
Mevacor	Lovastatin	Yes	\$130 Brand/\$40 Generic
Pravachol		No	\$151
Crestor		No	\$94
Zocor		No	\$148

Ask Your Health Care Practitioner During Your Next Visit

- Am I taking the most effective drug for my condition?*
- Are alternative drugs available that are equally effective?*
- Are alternative drugs available that are effective, but less costly?*
- Is there a generic available for my brand name drug?*
- Will this drug interact with other medication I take?*

RJLEE
& ASSOCIATES

1700- 52nd Avenue, Suite B
Moline, Illinois 61265
309-764-8080

The Most Effective Drugs At the Best Price

What Do These Drugs Have in Common?

- All statins lower cholesterol and lower LDL cholesterol. No one statin is better than the others, but they do vary in their LDL cholesterol lowering effects.
- All statins reduce the risk of major coronary events and stroke.
- All statins may cause muscle or liver damage, but there is not enough evidence to show that any of the statins cause more liver or muscle damage than any of the others.
- Statins are equally effective in men, women, and the elderly. No differences with regard to side effects exist among statins based on race, ethnicity, age, sex or diabetes.
- At usual dosages, statins usually are well tolerated and are associated with few side effects.

What Are the Key Differences Among These Drugs?

- Pravastatin, and possibly fluvastatin, have the least drug interactions.
- Atorvastatin, lovastatin, and simvastatin have the most interactions with certain drugs or food.
- Atorvastatin generally reduces total and LDL cholesterol greater than equivalent dosages of other statins. It has not been proven if this improves cardiovascular outcomes compared with the other statins.
- Drinking grapefruit juice or eating grapefruit interacts with the absorption of atorvastatin, lovastatin, and simvastatin. It does not appear to affect pravastatin, and possibly fluvastatin.

These conclusions apply to most people taking one of these drugs, but they may not necessarily apply to you. There may be less expensive alternatives to the drug you are taking. We encourage you to talk with your physician about which, if any, drug is best for you. Keep in mind that it is always up to the physician to determine the appropriate drug.