

Understanding Your Medications



UHN

IN GENERAL:

- Do not drink alcoholic beverages at the same time as your medications.
- If you experience any side effects that persist, your doctor will determine whether to decrease the dose of your medication, change the drug or, stop it altogether.

If you have questions or require more information,
please ask your Nurse or Pharmacist

“Statins”

“Statins” are Cholesterol Lowering medicines.

“Statins” are used to lower the “bad” cholesterol (LDL) and other fats (such as triglycerides) in the body. They can also increase the amount of “good” cholesterol (HDL) in the body. This helps to prevent heart disease, heart attacks and stroke.



The different types of “Statins” are:

- Rosuvastatin (Crestor®)
- Pravastatin (Pravachol®)
- Atorvastatin (Lipitor®)
- Fluvastatin (Lescol®)
- Simvastatin (Zocor®)
- Lovastatin (Mevacor®)

“Statins” are usually taken once a day in the evening.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information:

www.uhnpatienteducation.ca

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Do not eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice while taking **Statins**. It can increase the effects of the medicine in your body and increase the chance of side effects.

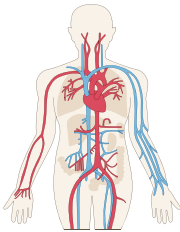
Possible side effects:

- Nausea
- Heartburn
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Feeling Dizzy
- Stomach pain or gas
- Headaches

Some side effects may go away as your body gets used to the medicine, however, call your doctor if you notice unexplained muscle pains or weakness, severe stomach pain, dark coloured urine, jaundice, severe vomiting, skin rash, numbness and tingling, or feel unusually tired.

“ACE Inhibitors”

“ACE Inhibitors” are also called Angiotension Converting Enzyme Inhibitors.



“ACE Inhibitors” are used to relax the blood vessels that take blood to and from the heart, improving heart function, strengthening the heart muscle and preventing further damage to the heart. They also cause loss of salt and water from the body thus, decreasing blood pressure.

The different types of “ACE Inhibitors” are:

- Ramipril (Altace®)
- Perindopril (Coversyl®)
- Enalapril (Vasotec®)
- Quinapril (Accupril®)
- Fosinopril (Monopril®)
- Lisinopril (Zestril® or Prinivil®)
- Cilazapril (Inhibace®)
- Benazepril (Lotensin®)
- Captopril (Capoten®)
- Trandolapril (Mavik®)

“ACE Inhibitors” are usually taken once or twice a day.

ACE Inhibitors should be used cautiously if you are also taking potassium supplements or have certain types of kidney problems. To avoid getting dizzy when starting an “ACE Inhibitor”, stand up slowly from a sitting or lying position.

Possible side effects:

- Low blood pressure
- Dry cough
- Dizziness
- Worsening kidney function
- Rash
- Increased potassium
- Taste changes



Some side effects may go away as your body gets used to the medicine, however, call your doctor if you notice a very persistent, bothersome cough, severe or prolonged dizziness, rash, or breathing difficulties.

“Beta Blockers”

“**Beta Blockers**” are a group of medications that work by decreasing the heart rate and reducing the work of the heart.

“**Beta Blockers**” are effective medications for a variety of medical conditions such as high blood pressure, certain types of arrhythmias (irregular heart beats), angina or chest pain, heart failure and most commonly, to reduce the chances of having another heart attack.



The different types of “Beta Blockers” are:

- Metoprolol (Lopressor®)
- Bisoprolol (Monacor®)
- Atenolol (Tenormin®)
- Carvedilol (Coreg®)
- Acebutolol (Sectral®)
- Nadolol (generics only)
- Propranolol (Inderal®)

“Beta Blockers” are usually taken once or twice a day.



When first starting “Beta Blockers,” you may feel tired. This usually gets better after a few weeks. If you feel dizzy, stand up slowly if you have been sitting or lying down and, do not operate a car or machinery until you feel better. This medication should be used with caution in diabetic and asthmatic patients.

Possible side effects:

- Feeling dizzy or drowsy
- Changes in blood sugar levels
- Feeling tired or weak
- Upset stomach
- Trouble sleeping
- Headache
- Constipation or diarrhea

Some side effects may go away as your body gets used to the medicine, however, call your doctor if you notice unexplained muscle pains or weakness, severe stomach pain, dark coloured urine, jaundice, severe vomiting, skin rash, numbness and tingling, or feel unusually tired.

“Acetylsalicylic acid”

“**Acetylsalicylic acid**” is also called Aspirin or ASA. It is an antiplatelet medication.

“**Acetylsalicylic acid**” is used to help prevent blood clotting. It is also used to prevent heart attacks, strokes and clotted stents. This medication is also used to relieve pain and fever, but at higher doses.

“Acetylsalicylic acid” is usually taken once a day with food or milk.



Do not take “Acetylsalicylic acid” with antacids, ibuprofen products, other ASA containing products or substances that can cause blood thinning, such as herbal supplements and vitamin E, without checking with your doctor or pharmacist.

Possible side effects:

- Stomach pain – to prevent stomach pain, try taking it with milk or food as well as use coated tablets
- Bleeding
- Nausea and vomiting

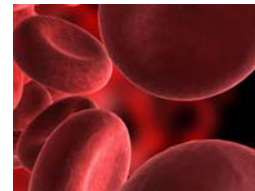


Some side effects may go away as your body gets used to the medicine, however, call your doctor if you notice fainting, dizziness, skin rash, itching or hives, unusual bruising or bleeding, severe stomach pain or ringing in the ears.

“Plavix”

“Plavix” is also called Clopidogrel. It is an antiplatelet medication.

“Plavix” is used in combination with “Acetylsalicylic acid” to prevent clots from forming on stents placed in coronary arteries during angioplasty. It prevents platelets (a component of blood) from sticking together and forming blood clots.



“Plavix” is usually taken once a day with food.

Do not take the combination of “Plavix” and “Acetylsalicylic acid” with any other substances that can cause blood thinning, such as ibuprofen products, herbal supplements and vitamin E. Acetaminophen “Tylenol” is safe to use in combination with these medicines.

Possible side effects:

- Stomach pain – to prevent stomach pain, try taking it with milk or food
- Bleeding

Some side effects may go away as your body gets used to the medicine, however, call your doctor if you notice skin rash or hives, unusual bruising or bleeding, prolonged severe diarrhea or jaundice.