

STATINS



Other names: Simvastatin (Lipex®, Arrow-Simva®)
 Atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Zarator®, Atorvastatin Pfizer®)
 Pravastatin (Pravachol®, Cholvastin®)
 Rosuvastatin (Crestor®)

Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking this medicine?

Statins are used to lower levels of cholesterol, also known as lipids (fat) in the blood. The body naturally makes cholesterol (a type of fat). Normally the body balances the cholesterol it makes with the cholesterol it gets from food. This means if more cholesterol comes from food, less is made by the body. However, if you eat a diet high in fat, your body may not keep this balance and your cholesterol levels rise.

High levels of cholesterol do not make people feel ill but can cause heart problems if left untreated. Cholesterol can build up in blood vessels and this increases the risk of having heart and blood vessel diseases, such as a heart attack or a stroke.

These medicines help prevent heart problems by reducing cholesterol (fat) building up in the blood vessel walls.

When to take this medicine

These medicines should be taken **once** a day in the **evening** with or without food (this is because your body naturally produces the most cholesterol at night).

Atorvastatin is an exception where it can be taken anytime of the day.

If you miss a dose

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- muscle pain, tenderness or weakness
- decreased urine or rust-coloured urine

- fever or sickness
- jaundice (yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes)
- difficulty breathing
- weight loss

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you:

- stomach upset or discomfort
- constipation or diarrhoea
- headache
- dizziness
- skin rash
- sleep disturbance
- forgetfulness

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

Other Medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Make sure your doctor knows if you are taking any of these medicines:

- cyclosporin (a drug often used in organ transplant patients)
- medicine like itraconazole (medicines for fungal infections)
- fibrates like gemfibrozil and bezafibrate (medicines for lowering cholesterol)
- antibiotics for bacterial infections (e.g. erythromycin, clarithromycin)
- HIV protease inhibitors such as atazanavir, darunavir, indinavir and ritonavir,
- calcium channel blockers (e.g. diltiazem)
- amiodarone (anti-arrhythmic medicine)

Do not take grapefruit or grapefruit juice with this medicine.

Avoid excessive alcohol intake while you are on this medication.

Lifestyle change is important in reducing cholesterol and heart disease. For example: eating healthy food, reducing caffeine intake, reducing salt intake, stopping smoking and increasing exercise levels.

Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.