



A Public Agency

CalOptima

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What is a statin? Who needs it?

A statin is a type of medicine that works to help lower the “bad” cholesterol in your body. Over time, high levels of “bad” cholesterol in your body can cause heart disease. Heart disease can increase your risk of a heart attack or stroke. Statins help to prevent a heart attack or stroke. Even though there are other medicines that help treat high cholesterol, statins have been shown to prevent heart disease. Some examples of statins include:

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

People who have diabetes or heart disease may benefit from taking a statin. Diabetes is a disease where your blood sugar is too high and can cause high blood pressure, blindness or nerve damage. It can also increase your risk for heart disease.

If you have diabetes or heart disease, ask your doctor if adding a statin to your treatment is right for you.

Statin medicines may interact with certain foods and other medicines. They may also cause side effects such as diarrhea, muscle and joint pain, headache, weakness and skin rash. Talk to your doctor about possible side effects and interactions. Let your doctor know if you have taken a statin before and experienced any side effects. Your doctor may be able to change your medicine to a different statin. Make sure to keep a current list of your medicines with you.



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