

Statin medications are a very important group of medications that are used to help lower cholesterol and prevent cholesterol from building up in your blood vessels. This means statins help lower your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Common statin medications are rosuvastatin (Crestor), atorvastatin (Lipitor), simvastatin (Zocor), pravastatin (Pravachol), lovastatin (Altoprev), pitavastatin (Livalo), and fluvastatin (Lescol).

Some people may be afraid to take statins because they have heard or read incorrect information about them. **Here are some common myths and reasons why these myths are not true:**

MYTH 1

STATINS WILL CAUSE MUSCLE ACHES AND WEAKNESS, HURT MY ABILITY TO EXERCISE AND HURT MY HEART.

Statin medications have been subjected to a lot of medical testing and research that shows they do not cause heart damage. Statins help to prevent strokes, heart attacks and death. Most people are not affected by statins when they exercise. In fact, the combination of exercise and a statin medication is very healthy for your heart.

Although it is rare, some people do experience muscle pain or weakness when they take a statin medication. Certain statins are more likely to cause muscle pain or weakness than other statins. If you were previously taking a statin that caused muscle pain your doctor may be able to prescribe a different statin or a lower dose of a statin that won't cause any muscle pains.

MYTH 2

ONE STATIN DID NOT WORK FOR ME. THAT MEANS I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TAKE A DIFFERENT STATIN.

Research has found that most people can tolerate statins either by changing to a different statin, changing to a lower strength statin or by taking it every other day. Don't give up on this life-saving medicine! Work with your doctor to find the right statin at a dose that works for you. Never make changes to your medications without talking with your doctor.

MYTH 3

A STATIN MEDICATION WILL CAUSE DIABETES OR MAKE MY DIABETES WORSE.

People with diabetes benefit the most from statins because they have a higher-than-average risk of having a heart attack or stroke. While statins may increase blood sugars, the overall benefit you get from taking a statin outweighs this risk. While taking your statin, watch your diet and include regular exercise in your routine.

Continued on next page

MYTH 4

STATINS CAUSE CONFUSION OR MEMORY LOSS THAT NEVER GOES AWAY.

Taking a statin does not cause dementia. In rare cases statins can cause temporary confusion or memory loss. This usually goes away after your body gets used to the medication.

MYTH 5

NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS LIKE RED YEAST RICE ARE SAFER THAN TAKING A STATIN.

There are no reliable studies that show that supplements, such as red yeast rice, prevent heart disease. Because statins are a prescription medication, they have gone through studies to prove that they work. Supplements are not required to be tested to see if they work.

MYTH 6

I CAN'T EAT GRAPEFRUIT OR DRINK GRAPEFRUIT JUICE IF I TAKE A STATIN.

Grapefruit affects the way your body absorbs some statins, but not all of them. Eating grapefruit or drinking grapefruit juice could make some statins more powerful. If you like grapefruit ask your doctor to put you on statin that is not affected by grapefruit.

Statins prevent strokes and heart attacks. Reduce your risk. Take your statin as directed.

