

Prepared for patient: _____

Patient counseled by: _____

Statin Medications

What are statin medications?

- “Statin” is the common name for a class of drugs officially called the HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors.
- This class of medications is very effective in lowering cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- In individuals who have had a stroke or a transient ischemic attack (TIA) keeping cholesterol levels within the desired range is an important part of preventing another stroke or TIA.
- There are several different statin medications including:
 - Simvastatin (Zocor) *This is the statin most commonly used at Kenmore Mercy
 - Atorvastatin (Lipitor)
 - Lovastatin (Mevacor)
 - Pravastatin (Pravachol)
 - Rosuvastatin (Crestor)
 - Fluvastatin (Lescol)
- Each statin medication is available in several different strengths. Your doctor will determine which statin and which dose are right for you.
- Statin medications will not make you “feel better”, but they are powerful medications working inside your body to help lower your cholesterol levels and decrease your chances of having another stroke or TIA.

How should I take statin medications?

- Statin medications should be taken exactly as directed by your doctor. Follow the directions printed on your prescription vial carefully.
- Statin medications are usually taken once daily in the evening. Your body makes the most cholesterol during the early morning hours while you sleep, and evening dosing is thought to be most effective.
- Certain statin medications need to be taken with food. Others can be taken with or without food. Simvastatin (Zocor) can be taken with or without food. If you are receiving a different statin medication refer to your prescription information or ask your pharmacist.
- Take your statin medication as long as directed by your doctor. Do not discontinue use without consulting your doctor.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose as scheduled. Do not double up on doses.

What else should I know?

- Do not consume large amounts of grapefruit or grapefruit juice while taking statin medications. Grapefruit juice can increase the levels of your medication and increase the risk of side effects.
- Certain herbal supplements including red yeast rice and St. John's Wort can interact with statin medications. Avoid use of these products.
- Several prescription medications can interact with statin medications. Always go to the same pharmacy so that your pharmacist can check your complete list of medications for interactions with your statin medication.
- Store your medication at room temperature away from light, moisture, and children.
- Statin medications are not a substitute for a low cholesterol diet and should be used in combination with a healthy diet.
- Your doctor will probably schedule blood tests while you are taking a statin medication. These blood tests check your liver function to make sure that it is working properly. It is very important that you go to all your scheduled doctor appointments and blood tests while taking a statin medication. These blood tests may also check your cholesterol levels to determine if your medication is working.
- The primary goal of statin medications in preventing another stroke or TIA is to lower your LDL cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol) to <100 mg/dL. Your doctor may have different goals for you and can help you interpret your test results.
- Statin medications should never be used during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Are there side effects to statin medications?

Tell your doctor *immediately* if you experience any of the following:

- Dark yellow or brown urine
- Decreasing urination or difficulty urinating
- Fever
- Muscle pain, cramps, or weakness
- Skin rash or itching
- Unusual tiredness or weakness
- Yellowing of skin or eyes

Less serious side effects: Notify your doctor if they persist or are bothersome.

- Constipation
- Headache
- Stomach upset
- Indigestion
- Gas
- Heartburn

If you have any additional questions regarding your medication, do not hesitate to contact a healthcare professional.

Prepared by:

Kenmore Mercy Hospital's Pharmacy Department

Rev: 2008

Reference: National Guideline Clearinghouse

www.guidelines.gov