

STATINS

Frequently Asked Questions

Certain risk factors and medical conditions can increase your chances of having a heart attack or stroke; however, you can take actions now to manage your condition and LOWER your risk. Review these FAQs for important information.

1. How do I decrease my risk of a heart attack or stroke?

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends statin medication for persons with certain medical conditions or risk factors to reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, and other types of heart disease. In addition to an appropriate intensity statin medication, it is recommended that people eat a heart-healthy diet, limit alcohol, quit tobacco, maintain a healthy weight, and engage in regular exercise.

2. How do statins work, and what dose is recommended for me?

Statins are a type of medicine, which work in several ways to reduce the risk of a heart attack or stroke. They prevent buildup of plaque in the arteries (atherosclerosis) by lowering low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and stabilize existing plaque to prevent worsening. They also decrease inflammation in the body so even persons with “normal” cholesterol can benefit from their use. Statins are prescribed in low, moderate or high intensity doses; however, experts recommend high intensity statins for those with certain conditions or risks to prevent heart disease and stroke.

3. What are the most common side effects and risks when taking statins?

Most people who take statins have no side effects. Serious side effects are rare. If you experience a side effect such as muscle pain, talk with your health care team first before stopping your statin as this could put you at risk for a heart attack or stroke. Your care team can help adjust the dose or medication to find the best solution.

Learn more about how statins can help you.

Visit <https://health.ucdavis.edu/health-education/topic/heart-health/heart-health-resources> or scan the code below

