

Patient's Name: John Q. Patient
Healthcare Provider's Name: Dr. Smith
Department: Cardiology
Phone: 617-555-1212
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Notes: Nurses can write personalized notes to patients here.

Atorvastatin

[En Español \(Spanish Version\)](#)

(a tore' va sta tin)

[WHY is this medicine prescribed?](#)

Atorvastatin is used together with diet, weight loss, and exercise to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke and to decrease the chance that heart surgery will be needed in people who have heart disease or who are at risk of developing heart disease. Atorvastatin is also used to decrease the amount of fatty substances such as low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol ('bad cholesterol') and triglycerides in the blood and to increase the amount of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol ('good cholesterol') in the blood. Atorvastatin may also be used to decrease the amount of cholesterol and other fatty substances in the blood in children and teenagers 10 to 17 years of age who have familial heterozygous hypercholesterolemia (an inherited condition in which cholesterol cannot be removed from the body normally). Atorvastatin is in a class of medications called HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors (statins). It works by slowing the production of cholesterol in the body to decrease the amount of cholesterol that may build up on the walls of the arteries and block blood flow to the heart, brain, and other parts of the body.

Accumulation of cholesterol and fats along the walls of your arteries (a process known as atherosclerosis) decreases blood flow and, therefore, the oxygen supply to your heart, brain, and other parts of your body. Lowering your blood level of cholesterol and fats with atorvastatin has been shown to prevent heart disease, angina (chest pain), strokes, and heart attacks.

[HOW should this medicine be used?](#)

Atorvastatin comes as a tablet to take by mouth. It is usually taken once a day with or without food. Take atorvastatin at around the same time every day. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take atorvastatin exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

Your doctor may start you on a low dose of atorvastatin and gradually increase your dose, not more than once every 2 to 4 weeks.

Continue to take atorvastatin even if you feel well. Do not stop taking atorvastatin without talking to your doctor.

Are there OTHER USES for this medicine?

This medication may be prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

What SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS should I follow?

Before taking atorvastatin,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to atorvastatin, any other medications, or any of the ingredients in atorvastatin tablets. Ask your pharmacist for a list of the ingredients.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking or plan to take. Be sure to mention any of the following: antifungal medications such as itraconazole (Sporanox) and ketoconazole (Nizoral); boceprevir (Victrelis); cimetidine (Tagamet); clarithromycin (Biaxin); cobicistat-containing medications (Stribild); colchicine (Colcrys); digoxin (Lanoxin); efavirenz (Sustiva, in Atripla); oral contraceptives (birth control pills); other cholesterol-lowering medications such as fenofibrate (Tricor), gemfibrozil (Lopid), and niacin (nicotinic acid, Niacor, Niaspan); certain HIV protease inhibitors such as darunavir (Prezista), fosamprenavir (Lexiva), lopinavir (in Kaletra), nelfinavir (Viracept), ritonavir (Norvir, in Kaletra), saquinavir (Invirase), and tipranavir (Aptivus); medications that suppress the immune system such as cyclosporine (Neoral, Sandimmune); rifampin (Rifadin, Rimactane); spironolactone (Aldactone); and telaprevir (Incivek). Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or monitor you carefully for side effects. Other medications may also interact with atorvastatin, so be sure to tell your doctor about all the medications you are taking, even those that do not appear on this list.
- tell your doctor if you have liver disease. Your doctor will order laboratory tests to see how well your liver is working even if you do not think you have liver disease. Your doctor will probably tell you not to take atorvastatin if you have or have had liver disease or if the tests show you may be developing liver disease.
- tell your doctor if you drink more than 2 alcoholic beverages daily, if you are 65 years of age or older, if you have ever had liver disease, and if you have or have ever had muscle aches or weakness; diabetes, seizures, low blood pressure, or thyroid or kidney disease.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. You should not become pregnant while you are taking atorvastatin. Talk to your doctor about birth control methods that you can use during your treatment. If you become pregnant while taking atorvastatin, stop taking atorvastatin and call your doctor immediately. Atorvastatin may harm the fetus.
- do not breast-feed while you are taking this medication.
- if you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are taking atorvastatin. If you are hospitalized due to serious injury or infection, tell the doctor who treats you that you are taking atorvastatin.
- ask your doctor about the safe use of alcoholic beverages while you are taking atorvastatin. Alcohol can increase the risk of serious side effects.

What SPECIAL DIETARY instructions should I follow?

Eat a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet. Be sure to follow all exercise and dietary recommendations made by your doctor or dietitian. You can also visit the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) website for additional dietary information at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol_tlc.pdf>.

Avoid drinking large amounts [more than 1.2 liter (approximately 1 quart) per day] of grapefruit juice while taking atorvastatin.

What should I do IF I FORGET to take a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is less than 12 hours until your next scheduled dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What SIDE EFFECTS can this medicine cause?

Atorvastatin may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- diarrhea
- heartburn
- gas
- joint pain
- forgetfulness or memory loss
- confusion

Some side effects can be serious. The following symptoms are uncommon, but if you experience any of them, call your doctor or get emergency medical help immediately:

- muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness
- lack of energy
- fever
- chest pain
- nausea
- extreme tiredness
- weakness
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- loss of appetite
- pain in the upper right part of the stomach
- flu-like symptoms
- dark colored urine
- yellowing of the skin or eyes
- rash
- hives
- itching
- difficulty breathing or swallowing
- swelling of the face, throat, tongue, lips, eyes, hands, feet, ankles, or lower legs
- hoarseness

Atorvastatin may cause other side effects. Call your doctor if you have any unusual problems while taking this medication.

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online [at <http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>] or by phone [1-800-332-1088].

What should I know about STORAGE and DISPOSAL of this medication?

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

What should I do in case of OVERDOSE?

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

What OTHER INFORMATION should I know?

Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor may order certain lab tests during your treatment, especially if you develop symptoms of liver damage.

Before having any laboratory test, tell your doctor and the laboratory personnel that you are taking atorvastatin.

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.

Brand Names

- Lipitor[®]
- Caduet[®] (as a combination product containing Amlodipine, Atorvastatin)
- Liptruzet[®] (as a combination product containing Atorvastatin, Ezetimibe)
- Also available generically

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