

# Important Information About Your New Cholesterol Lowering Medication

## Why am I taking a Statin?

Statins are highly effective, well-researched, and commonly used medicines that lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol—often referred to as "bad" cholesterol—in your blood.

- **Purpose:** High levels of LDL cholesterol can cause fatty deposits to build up in your arteries (atherosclerosis), which can restrict blood flow and increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.
- **Goal:** By reducing your cholesterol, this treatment aims to significantly lower your risk of developing these serious cardiovascular issues in the future.
- **Lifestyle:** While medication helps, combining this with a healthy diet, regular exercise, and not smoking will give you the best results.

## How to take it

Take your medication once a day as prescribed.

- Most people take them in the evening, though some types can be taken at any time.
- It is important to continue taking this medication long-term, as stopping it may cause your cholesterol levels to rise again within a few weeks.

## Possible Side Effects

Most people who take statins experience no or very minor side effects. However, as with all medications, some people may experience side effects.

Common, usually minor side effects include:

- Headache
- Digestive problems (constipation, diarrhoea, indigestion, nausea)
- Muscle aches, pain, or weakness



## **When to Contact Us**

While muscle aches are common, it is important to contact the surgery if you experience unexplained, persistent muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness.

Rarely, statins can cause more severe muscle damage or liver problems. Seek advice if you notice:

- Severe muscle pain or weakness
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), or dark-coloured urine
- Severe abdominal pain

## **Monitoring Your Treatment**

It is recommended that you have a blood test at 3 months and 12 months after starting your statin to check your cholesterol levels and ensure the medication is working properly and is safe for you. We will contact you when you are due for your blood tests.

## **What to do next**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the practice to speak with a pharmacist or GP. Please read the full patient information leaflet included in the medication box.