

What is Atorvastatin?

Atorvastatin, also called Lipitor®, is an antilipemic agent, which means it is used to treat high cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. Even if your cholesterol is normal, you may be asked to take an antilipemic.

How does it work?

Atorvastatin lowers “bad” cholesterol (low density lipoprotein or LDL) and helps increase “good” cholesterol (high density lipoprotein or HDL). Bad cholesterol is known as low-density lipoprotein (LDL). “Good” cholesterol is known as high-density lipoprotein (HDL). “Bad” cholesterol can put you at risk for stroke and cardiovascular disease because it forms plaque in your blood vessels. That plaque can then cause a blockage in the blood vessel.

What are my responsibilities as the patient?

- Talk to your health care provider before taking any other prescriptions, over the counter medications, herbal preparations, or dietary supplements.
- Take Atorvastatin as your health care provider directed.
- Take a missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if your next dose is less than 12 hours away.
- Don’t double doses.
- Maintain a low-fat, reduced-calorie diet
- Stop smoking
- Exercise regularly
- Limit alcohol intake
- Do not use Atorvastatin if you are pregnant or breast-feeding.

What are the dosing instructions?

- Take Atorvastatin at the same time of day each day.
- Atorvastatin may be taken with or without food.
- Do not break or crush tablet.
- Avoid large amounts of grapefruit juice. Orange juice can be a substitute for grapefruit juice.

What other drugs does Atorvastatin interact with?

Talk to your doctor if you are taking one of these medication.

- Antibiotics and antifungals (Niacin)
- Protease inhibitors
- Cyclosporine
- Gemfibrozil
- Posaconazole
- Amodiaquine

What are the side effects, what should I be looking for?

Notify your health care provider if you experience:

- Muscle pain
- Confusion
- Memory loss
- Unexplained fever
- Red, blistering, or peeling skin
- Altered urinary quantity or frequency
- Swelling in your feet or ankles
- Sudden weakness or numbness
- Slurred speech

- Problems with vision or balance
- Tenderness, cramps, or weakness,
- Jaundice (yellowing in skin or eyes)
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Anorexia
- Stomach pain
- Dark urine
- Pale stools
- Unusual fatigue

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Author: Anne Mcleod RN DNPc
Reviewers: Eric Adelman MD

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