

# Medications



Your prescriptions can be filled by your home pharmacy or by the Michigan Medicine Taubman Center outpatient pharmacy.

## **What do I need to know about medications after my heart attack?**

When you are discharged, your nurse will provide you a medication list and prescriptions for your medications. It is very important to learn about all your medications: why you are taking them, potential side effects, the dose, and when you should take them. The list given to you will include:

- The name of the medication
- The times you should take it

Some medications will be taken for about 1 year and others will be needed life-long. When you go home, take only the medications your doctor has prescribed for you.

Bring your medication list with you to your return visit with your heart doctor. Your heart doctor will review your medicines and may make updates.

## **Where can I get my prescriptions filled?**

Your prescriptions can be filled by your home pharmacy or by the Michigan Medicine outpatient pharmacy located on the first floor of the Taubman Center. Discuss with your nurse where you will be filling your prescriptions. If you wish to fill them at the hospital, be sure to remind staff to send your prescriptions to the pharmacy the day you go home. A family member or friend must go down to pick them up for you.

I have a reliable pharmacy.

Name:

Location:

My Care Team knows where to send my prescription.

## What do I need to know about each type of medication?

Medicine	Why do I need this medicine?	How does this medicine work?	How do I take this medicine?	What are the side effects?
<b>Antiplatelet medicines</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspirin</li> </ul>	Aspirin lowers your chance of death, stroke, and another heart attack.	Aspirin helps stop blood clots in the vessels of your heart. It lowers the ability of the platelets to stick together.	Aspirin 81 mg tablet or a “baby aspirin” is taken once daily. Do not stop taking this medicine unless your doctor tells you to do so.	<p>This medicine may raise your chance of bleeding.</p> <p>If aspirin upsets your stomach, take with food.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clopidogrel (Plavix®)</li> <li>• Prasugrel (Effient®)</li> <li>• Ticagrelor (Brilinta®)</li> </ul>	These medicines lower your chance of death, stroke, and another heart attack.	Like aspirin, these medicines stop platelets from sticking together and helps prevent blood clots. However, these medicines work differently than aspirin.	Do not stop taking this medicine unless your doctor tells you to do so.	This medicine may raise your chance of bleeding. Tell your doctor if you have any planned surgeries or dental work.
<b>Cholesterol lowering medicines or “statins”</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atorvastatin (Lipitor®)</li> <li>• Rosuvastatin (Crestor®)</li> <li>• Pravastatin (Pravachol®)</li> <li>• Simvastatin (Zocor®)</li> </ul>	These medicines lower your chance of death and another heart attack.	This medicine lowers the amount of cholesterol in your blood. Cholesterol can build up in blood vessels and cause heart attacks. A statin medicine stops this from happening. It also reduces inflammation in your blood vessels.	This medicine works best when you take it at night.	Muscle pain may happen with this medicine. If this happens, talk to your doctor.

Medicine	Why do I need this medicine?	How does this medicine work?	How do I take this medicine?	What are the side effects?
<b>Beta blockers</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Atenolol (Tenormin®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Carvedilol (Coreg®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Metoprolol (Lopressor® or Toprol XL®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Labetolol (Trandate®)</b></li> </ul>	<p>These medicines lower your chance of death, another heart attack, and reduces chest pain.</p>	<p>Beta-blockers slow your heart rate and decrease how hard your heart has to work. By slowing your heart, beta-blockers also help blood flow to the vessels of your heart muscle.</p>	<p>Take these medicines as prescribed by your doctor.</p>	<p>These medicines may lower your heart rate and blood pressure. If you feel lightheaded or dizzy, tell your doctor.</p> <p>You may feel tired and weak when you start taking this medicine. This will stop if you continue to take this medicine.</p>
<b>ACE inhibitors</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lisinopril (Prinivil®, Zestril®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Enalapril (Vasotec®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Ramipril (Altace®)</b></li> </ul>	<p>These medicines lower your chance of death, another heart attack, and heart failure after a heart attack.</p>	<p>These medicines lower blood pressure by making your blood vessels wider. This helps blood flow away from your heart easier.</p>	<p>Take these medicines as prescribed by your doctor.</p> <p>When you get up for a sitting or lying position, please do so slowly to prevent lightheadedness or dizziness.</p>	<p>A side effect of these medicines is dry cough. If this happens, you can talk to your doctor about switching to another medicine called an ARB (for example, losartan [Cozaar®] or valsartan [Diovan®]).</p> <p>Low blood pressure may happen with these medicines. If you feel lightheaded or dizzy, talk to your doctor.</p>

Medicine	Why do I need this medicine?	How does this medicine work?	How do I take this medicine?	What are the side effects?
<b>Aldosterone antagonist</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Spirolactone (Aldactone®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Eplerenone (Inspra®)</b></li> </ul>	<p>In certain patients, these medicines lower your chance of death.</p>	<p>These medicines are a weak diuretic, but it has other benefits for your heart, as well.</p>	<p>Take these medicines as prescribed by your doctor.</p> <p>It is best to take these medicines in the morning.</p>	<p>These medicines may increase potassium levels. Your doctor will monitor this with blood tests.</p> <p>Spirolactone may cause breast tenderness. If this happens, let your doctor know.</p>
<b>Diuretics or “water pills”</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Furosemide (Lasix®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Bumetanide (Bumex®)</b></li> <li>• <b>Torsemide (Demadex®)</b></li> </ul>	<p>These medicines help you feel better by decreasing fluid build-up.</p>	<p>These medicines help your body get rid of extra fluid by making you urinate.</p>	<p>It is best to take these medicines in the morning. Do not take your diuretic before going to bed.</p> <p>If you take a diuretic twice daily, take your first dose early in the morning and take the second dose around 6 to 8 hours later. This helps prevent your need to get up at night to urinate.</p>	<p>These medicines may cause low potassium. You may need to take a potassium pill with your diuretic. Your doctor will let you know if you need to.</p> <p>Low blood pressure may happen with these medicines. If you start to feel dizzy or lightheaded, call your doctor.</p>

## What are some Do's and Don'ts when it comes to your medications?

### DO:

- Learn both the generic and brand names of all your medicines.
- Keep a list of all your prescription and over-the-counter medicines, dosages, and purposes.
- Keep this list up to date and carry with you at all times.
- Take this list to all of your appointments and show it to your healthcare providers.
- Take your medicines exactly as directed. Using them the wrong way can make you feel worse instead of better.
- Take only what is prescribed for you.
- Refill your prescriptions on time. If your prescription is running low, call your doctor for a refill at least 1 week before you run out of the medicines.
- Call your healthcare provider or pharmacist right away if you have any problems.
- Read and save written information that comes with your prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines. This written information will tell you what kind of side effects may occur.

### DON'T:

- Don't stop taking your prescribed medicine, even if you are feeling better.
- Don't stop, skip, or take an extra dose of your medicines without checking with your doctor.
- Don't drink alcohol while taking a medicine unless your doctor says it's okay.
- Don't be afraid to contact your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you have any questions!

Don't stop taking your  
prescribed medicine,  
even if you are  
feeling better

# Nitroglycerin

**N**itroglycerin widens the blood vessels to your heart. This increases blood flow and helps relieve chest pain. There are many different types of nitroglycerin. Long-acting nitroglycerin can prevent chronic chest pain and is usually taken every day. Fast-acting nitroglycerin helps stop sudden-onset chest pain and should only be used when needed.

Below are the different types of nitroglycerin:

- Fast-acting:
  - > Sublingual tablet (Nitrostat®)
  - > Sublingual spray (NitroMist®, Nitrolingual®)
- Long-acting:
  - > Patch (Nitro-Dur®, Minitran®)
  - > Tablets (isosorbide mononitrate - Imdur®, isosorbide dinitrate - Isordil®)
  - > Ointment (Nitro-Bid®)

The fast-acting nitroglycerin should be used if you have a sudden-onset of chest pain. One dose is 1 tablet or 1 spray. **It is important to always read the instructions included with your medication when you pick it up from the pharmacy.** As a reminder, follow the steps on the next page when you take your fast-acting nitroglycerin.

## Reminders:

- Carry nitroglycerin with you at all times. Keep it at room temperature (do not keep in your pocket). Keep it in the container it came in. Always keep the container tightly closed.
- Make sure to check the expiration date. Do not use if the medication has expired. Call your doctor for a refill if the nitroglycerin has expired.
- Talk to your doctor if you use medications for erectile dysfunction or pulmonary hypertension when you are prescribed nitroglycerin.

## Side effects:

- Headaches
- Low blood pressure – always sit down prior to taking short-acting nitroglycerin

## How do I take my fast-acting Nitroglycerin sublingual spray or tablet?

1. Sit down before you take your nitroglycerin.

2. **Spray:**

Spray once under your tongue or onto your tongue. Close your mouth after spray.

- > Do not inhale spray.
- > Do not rinse your mouth or drink/eat/spit for at least 5-10 minutes after taking.

**Tablet:**

- Place the tablet under your tongue and let it dissolve completely.
- Do not swallow the tablet.

3. Wait 5 minutes then:

- > If your chest pain is relieved, contact your doctor. You do not need to call 911.
- > If your chest pain lasts longer than 5 minutes or gets worse, Call 911.

4. If you call 911, take a second spray or tablet of nitroglycerin.

5. Wait another 5 minutes.

6. If the chest pain still doesn't go away, take a third spray. You can take up to 3 sprays or 3 tablets in 15 minutes.

