



## Lipitor (Atorvastatin Calcium, Oral)

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### **What are other names for this medicine?**

Type of medicine: HMG CoA reductase inhibitor; statin  
Generic and brand names: atorvastatin calcium, oral; Lipitor

### **What is this medicine used for?**

This medicine is taken by mouth to lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels when diet and exercise alone have not lowered them enough.

It may also be used for other conditions such as:

- to reduce the risk of heart attack
- to prevent stroke and other heart disease
- to treat angina (chest pain).

Your healthcare provider will explain why you are taking this medicine

### **What should my healthcare provider know before I take this medicine?**

Before taking this medicine, tell your healthcare provider if you have ever had:

- an allergic reaction to any medicine
- a thyroid disorder
- kidney or liver disease
- problems with alcohol abuse
- seizures
- unexplained muscle aches or weakness.

Females of childbearing age: Do not take this medicine if you are pregnant because it may harm the baby. If you are pregnant, tell your healthcare provider. Do not become pregnant during treatment with this medicine. Stop taking this medicine at the first sign that you may be pregnant and contact your healthcare provider right away. Do not breast-feed while you are taking this medicine.

## **How do I take it?**

Take this medicine exactly as directed by your healthcare provider for the length of time prescribed. Take it regularly every day. Do not change your dosage or stop taking this medicine without your healthcare provider's approval.

You may take this medicine with or without food. Taking it with meals may lessen the chance the drug will upset your stomach.

Your healthcare provider may prescribe another medicine to be taken with this medicine. Follow your healthcare provider's directions exactly for taking both medicines.

You need to follow a low-fat diet and a regular exercise program to help reduce your cholesterol level. Follow your healthcare provider's directions.

If do you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for the next scheduled dose. In that case, skip the missed dose and take the next one as directed. Do not take double doses. If you are not sure of what to do if you miss a dose, or if you miss more than one dose, contact your healthcare provider.

## **What should I watch out for?**

While you are taking this medicine, report any unusual muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness to your healthcare provider right away, especially if you also have a fever or feel ill.

Your healthcare provider will want to see you regularly while you are taking this medicine. You will need blood tests to see if the medicine is working. You will also have liver function tests to see how the medicine may be affecting your liver. Keep all your appointments.

You should stop taking this medicine a few days before surgery or certain other medical procedures. Discuss this with your healthcare provider.

## **What are the possible side effects?**

Along with its needed effects, your medicine may cause some unwanted side effects. Some side effects may be very serious. Some side effects may go away as your body adjusts to the medicine. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that continue or get worse.

Life-threatening (Report these to your healthcare provider right away. If you cannot reach your healthcare provider right away, get emergency medical care or call 911 for help): Allergic reaction (hives; itching; rash; trouble breathing; tightness in your chest; swelling of your lips, tongue, and throat).

Serious (report these to your healthcare provider right away): Chest pain; unusual muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, especially if you also have a fever or vision changes; yellowing of your skin or eyes; dark urine; pale stools.

Other: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, urinary tract infection, gas, constipation, rash, itching, headache, dizziness, runny nose, fatigue, trouble sleeping.

### **What products might interact with this medicine?**

When you take this medicine with other medicines, it can change the way this or any of the other medicines work. Nonprescription medicines, vitamins, natural remedies, and certain foods may also interact. Using these products together might cause harmful side effects. Talk to your healthcare provider if you are taking:

- antacids such as Maalox TC (Take antacids 2 hours apart from doses of this medicine.)
- antibiotics such as erythromycin (Erythromycin, E-Mycin, E.E.S., EryPed), clarithromycin (Biaxin), and telithromycin (Ketek)
- antidepressants such as fluvoxamine (Luvox) and nefazodone
- antifungals such as itraconazole (Sporanox), fluconazole (Diflucan), ketoconazole (Nizoral), and voriconazole (Vfend)
- birth control pills
- bosentan (Tracleer)
- cyclosporine (Sandimmune, Neoral, Gengraf)
- danazol (Danocrine)
- digoxin (Lanoxin)
- esomeprazole (Nexium)
- heart medicines such as amiodarone (Cordarone, Pacerone), diltiazem (Cardizem, Tiazac), and verapamil (Calan, Calan SR, Covera-HS, Isoptin, Isoptin SR, Verelan, Verelan PM)
- nicotinic acid (niacin)
- other cholesterol medicines such as cholestyramine (Questran, LoCHOLEST, Prevalite), colestipol (Colestid), fenofibrate (Lofibra, TriCor), and gemfibrozil (Lopid)
- phenytoin (Dilantin)
- protease inhibitors such as indinavir (Crixivan), nelfinavir (Viracept), amprenavir (Agenerase), ritonavir (Norvir), saquinavir (Invirase, Fortovase), delavirdine (Rescriptor), lopinavir/ritonavir (Kaletra), and atazanavir (Reyataz)
- quinupristin/dalfopristin (Synercid)
- St. John's wort
- warfarin (Coumadin).

The effects of this medicine may be increased if you take it with grapefruit juice. Discuss this with your healthcare provider.

Do not drink alcohol while you are taking this medicine without your healthcare provider's approval.

**Keep a list of all your medicines (prescription, nonprescription, supplements, natural remedies, and vitamins) with you. Be sure that you tell all healthcare providers who treat you about all the products you are taking.**

### **How should I store this medicine?**

Store this medicine at room temperature. Keep the container tightly closed. Protect it from heat, high humidity, and bright light.

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This advisory includes **selected information only** and may not include all side effects of this medicine or interactions with other medicines. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information or if you have any questions.

Ask your pharmacist for the best way to dispose of outdated medicine or medicine you have not used. Do not throw medicine in the trash.

**Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.**

**Do not share medicines with other people.**