

Five Myths About Statins

MYTH #1

You don't need a statin unless your LDL cholesterol is extremely high



TRUTH: Your cholesterol may be “too high for you” even if it is not extremely elevated.

Statins work regardless of your starting LDL cholesterol level. For every ~40 mg/dL reduction in your LDL cholesterol on statins, your risk of heart attack, stroke, or need for a procedure to treat a heart blockage is reduced by 22%.¹ If you have heart disease or are at risk for heart disease, and your LDL-C is >70 mg/dL, you can benefit from a statin!

MYTH #2

Statins frequently cause severe muscle problems



TRUTH: Statins are as well tolerated as placebo (a.k.a. “sugar pills”) in randomized trials.

Muscle and joint aches and pains are common in the general population, and statins are also widely used, so many people falsely attribute their symptoms to their statin. In clinical trials, similar numbers of people have muscle aches when given a statin as when given a placebo. Actual severe muscle damage from statins can happen, but is very rare, affecting less than 1 in 10,000 people.²

MYTH #3

Statins cause “brain fog”



TRUTH: Statins do not impact cognition, but they do prevent strokes!

Cognitive function in patients on statins has been studied in thousands of people – with no difference in cognition between those given a statin and those given placebo. Statins actually protect your brain. For every ~40 mg/dL reduction in LDL-C, statins lower the risk of stroke by 16%.² There has also been no evidence that effective lowering of LDL-C results in any cognitive changes.

MYTH #4

Statins are only recommended to make money for pharmaceutical companies



TRUTH: Statins are one of the most affordable treatments available and are accessible as generics!

A month supply of even the highest intensity statin can cost <\$10 to smart shoppers. Websites such as GoodRx.com may be able to help you find the best price at a pharmacy near you!

MYTH #5

You don't need to worry about your diet or exercise if you're on a statin



TRUTH: Statins, exercise, and a healthy diet work together to protect heart health!

Taking a statin doesn't mean you are “off the hook” for other important lifestyle changes. A healthy diet, regular exercise, and medications such as statins work together to lower your risk of heart attack, stroke, the need for stenting or bypass surgery, and dying.

