

Who would benefit from statin therapy?

Primary Prevention of Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease (ASCVD)

ASCVD can be caused by many risk factors. Your risk of having an ASCVD event over the next 10 years or at any point during your lifetime can be calculated with an [ASCVD risk calculator](#) and is based on your:

- Age
- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Total cholesterol and High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol
- Blood pressure and whether you take blood pressure medications
- Whether you have diabetes or smoke

If you are age 40 to 75 years old and don't have diabetes, you may fall into 1 of 4 risk categories:

Calculated
10-year ASCVD
risk score

Low Risk
<5%

Borderline Risk
5 to 7.4%

Intermediate Risk
7.5 to 19.9%

High Risk
20%
or higher

A healthy lifestyle can help lower your risk of ASCVD, but some people may need medications to help lower their risk. Statins are a class of medication that lower Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and have been shown to **reduce the risk of ASCVD events, including a heart attack, stroke, and premature (early) death.** People with higher ASCVD risk are most likely to benefit from statins to help lower their risk of ASCVD. They are usually taken once-a-day as an oral tablet.

- ❗ A statin medication is recommended for people at **HIGH RISK** to lower their risk of ASCVD.
- ⚠️ A statin medication may be recommended for people at **INTERMEDIATE RISK** if they have one or more of the following risk-enhancing factors:

- Family history of early ASCVD (*males younger than 55 years; females younger than 65 years*)
- An LDL cholesterol of 160 mg/dL or higher
- Metabolic syndrome
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic inflammatory conditions (*psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis*)
- Women with a history of early menopause (*before age 40*) or pre-eclampsia
- Certain high-risk ethnic groups, like people of South Asian ethnicity
- High triglycerides above 175 mg/dL
- A high coronary artery calcium score (*Lower is better, zero is the best*)

You and your healthcare team should discuss the benefits and risks of starting a statin medication.

Rechecking your cholesterol levels regularly will show you and your doctor how well the medication and heart-healthy lifestyle changes are working to lower your cholesterol and risk of ASCVD events.