NATIONAL LIPID ASSOCIATION

FOUR KEY HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE

2018 Guideline on the Management of Blood Cholesterol

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Top 10 Take-Home Messages to Reduce Risk of Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease Through Cholesterol Management

#1 HEART-HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

In all individuals, emphasize a heart-healthy lifestyle across the life course. A healthy lifestyle reduces atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) risk at all ages. In younger individuals, healthy lifestyle can reduce development of risk factors and is the foundation of ASCVD risk reduction. In young adults 20 to 39 years of age, an assessment of lifetime risk facilitates the clinician–patient risk discussion and emphasizes intensive lifestyle efforts. In all age groups, lifestyle therapy is the primary intervention for metabolic syndrome.

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#2 CLINICAL ASCVD

In patients with clinical ASCVD, reduce low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) with high intensity statin therapy or maximally tolerated statin therapy. The more LDL-C is reduced on statin therapy, the greater will be subsequent risk reduction. Use a maximally tolerated statin to lower LDL-C levels by ≥50%.

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#3 VERY HIGH-RISK ASCVD

In very high-risk ASCVD, use a LDL-C threshold of 70 mg/dL (1.8 mmol/L) to consider addition of nonstatins to statin therapy. Very high-risk includes a history of multiple major ASCVD events or 1 major ASCVD event and multiple high-risk conditions. In very high-risk ASCVD patients, it is reasonable to add ezetimibe to maximally tolerated statin therapy when the LDL-C level remains ≥70 mg/dL (≥1.8 mmol/L). In patients at very high risk whose LDL-C level remains ≥70 mg/dL (≥1.8 mmol/L) on maximally tolerated statin and ezetimibe therapy, adding a PCSK9 inhibitor is reasonable, although the long-term safety (>3 years) is uncertain and cost effectiveness is low at mid-2018 list prices.

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#4 SEVERE PRIMARY HYPERCHOLESTEROLEMIA

In patients with severe primary hypercholesterolemia (LDL-C level ≥190 mg/dL [≥4.9 mmol/L]), without calculating 10-year ASCVD risk, begin high-intensity statin therapy without calculating 10-year ASCVD risk. If the LDL-C level remains ≥100 mg/dL (≥2.6 mmol/L), adding ezetimibe is reasonable. If the LDL-C level on statin plus ezetimibe remains ≥100 mg/dL (≥2.6 mmol/L) and the patient has multiple factors that increase subsequent risk of ASCVD events, a PCSK9 inhibitor may be considered, although the long-term safety (>3 years) is uncertain and economic value is low at mid-2018 list prices.