



## **Statin (stat-TIN) Use in Children. What Parents Should Know.**

### **What is cholesterol?**

Cholesterol, a type of fat normally found in the blood, promotes normal growth and development. Children with high cholesterol are generally healthy. However, over many years cholesterol can build up in blood vessels, increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke as an adult.

### **What are statins?**

Widely used for over 30 years, statins lower excess cholesterol in the blood. Along with a healthy lifestyle, statins help reduce risk of heart disease.

### **Are statins recommended for children?**

Yes. Long-term studies have shown that statins do not cause problems with growth, development or reproductive function.

### **Which statins are approved for children?**

All statins are approved for children, some as young as 8 years-of-age, others at age 10 and older. Statins may be recommended in children less than 8 years-of-age if a child has other risk factors, health conditions, or severe forms of high cholesterol.

### **How are statins taken?**

Statin are pills taken by mouth, with or without food, once a day. If your child takes other medications, the statin can be taken along with them. Check with your Healthcare Team before taking any new medication or supplement.

### **Are there long-term studies of statin use in children?**

Children who have taken a statin for over 20 years have shown them to be both safe and effective. Statin use, beginning at an early age, provides the best opportunity for preventing future heart disease.

### **How long will my child need to take a statin?**

Children who have high cholesterol will likely need to take cholesterol-lowering medication, like a statin, for their entire life.

### **What side effects may occur with statins?**

Your child's response to the statin will be carefully monitored. Muscle aches and pains can occur in adults who take statins, but rarely occur in youth. Most muscle aches and pains in children are due to exercise, strenuous play, or injury, in which case the statin can safely be continued. If you are concerned that your child is experiencing symptoms related to their statin, notify your Healthcare Team right away.

People who can become pregnant need a plan for birth control if they are taking a statin.

### **Will my child be able to participate in activities while taking a statin?**

Yes. Your child can participate in all of his/her usual activities. If you have concerns, talk with your Healthcare Team about how much and what kind of activities are best.