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# WHAT STATIN USERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COENZYME Q<sub>10</sub>

## Statin drugs reduce coenzyme Q<sub>10</sub> levels

Statins, commonly prescribed cholesterol-lowering medications, not only lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol; they also inhibit the body’s natural production of coenzyme Q<sub>10</sub> (CoQ<sub>10</sub>). **In fact, statins have been reported to reduce CoQ<sub>10</sub> levels in the blood by up to 50%.** CoQ<sub>10</sub> is naturally present in all cells of the body and is vital for cellular energy production – especially in the heart. Without adequate levels of CoQ<sub>10</sub>, energy production in cells would decline, and the function of the heart would be seriously compromised.

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**Supplementing with 100 mg of CoQ<sub>10</sub> per day helps replenish CoQ<sub>10</sub> levels reduced by statin use.**

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## CoQ<sub>10</sub> may help reduce statin-induced muscle pain

Although statins are highly effective at lowering LDL cholesterol, their use does not come without potential side effects including muscle aches and rare but serious muscle damage. Preliminary research suggests that CoQ<sub>10</sub> supplementation may help reduce muscle pain.

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**In a preliminary study, statin users reported a 40% decrease in statin-induced muscle pain intensity after taking 100 mg of coenzyme Q<sub>10</sub> for 30 days.**

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## CoQ<sub>10</sub> helps protect against LDL cholesterol

CoQ<sub>10</sub> is also known for its potent antioxidant activity and, as a result, helps protect arteries from damaging effects of oxidized LDL cholesterol. Oxidized LDL cholesterol is thought to damage blood vessels and may trigger the development of arterial plaque. The buildup of plaque leads to the narrowing of arteries and eventually can block blood flow to the heart and brain, causing heart attack or stroke.

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## PREVALENCE OF STATIN DRUG USE

14

million Canadians have high cholesterol, a major contributor to heart disease.

30.3

million prescriptions for cholesterol-lowering statins were filled in Canada in 2010, up from about 21 million in 2006. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the use of statins has increased tenfold over the past two decades.

According to IMS Brogan, which tracks prescription drug sales and provides other services for the health care industry, Canadians spent a total of \$2 billion on statins alone in 2010.

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## FIVE LIFESTYLE STRATEGIES FOR LOWERING CHOLESTEROL

Lifestyle changes can help reduce LDL cholesterol, enhance the cholesterol-lowering effect of medications, and possibly lower the amount of medications needed. Here are the top five most important lifestyle changes you can make:

- 1 **Lose weight.** Losing as little as 5 to 10 pounds can make a difference.
- 2 **Eat a heart-healthy diet.** Consume more whole grains, fruit, and vegetables, as well as foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (e.g., fish, walnuts, and flax seed).
- 3 **Exercise – 30 minutes a day, every day.**
- 4 **Quit smoking.** If you smoke, stop.
- 5 **Practise moderate alcohol intake.** Moderate use of alcohol has been linked to higher levels of HDL (“good”) cholesterol.