

OREGON HEALTH POLICY AND RESEARCH

Health Resources Commission

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Oregon's Drug Review: Evidence on Statins

Heart disease causes one out of five deaths among Americans. A key risk for heart attack and stroke is elevated cholesterol. Statins lower the LDL or bad cholesterol.

Which Drugs Were Included In This Review?

- This review looked at the following statins.
- The review did not include fixed combinations of statins with other drugs.

• atorvastatin (Lipitor)	• pravastatin (Pravachol)
• fluvastatin (Lescol, Lescol XL)	• rosuvastatin (Crestor)
• lovastatin (Altacor ER, Mevacor)	• simvastatin (Zocor)

What Do These Drugs Have In Common?

- All statins lower cholesterol and lower LDL.
- Lipitor, Pravachol, and Zocor reduce strokes.
- All but Crestor have improved heart disease.
- All statins may cause serious harm in muscles or liver.
- No differences exist among statins by age, sex, or diabetes. Little data exists about use in African-Americans, Hispanics, or other ethnic groups.

What Are the Key Differences Among These Drugs?

- Atorvastatin, pravastatin, and simvastatin lower risk of stroke.
- Pravastatin has the least drug interactions.
- Atorvastatin, lovastatin, and simvastatin have the most drug interactions. This concerns people who have HIV or had a transplant. Then **fluvastatin or pravastatin** are better due to fewer drug interactions.

Ask Your Health Care Practitioner During Your Next Visit:

- Am I taking the most effective drug for my condition?
- Are alternative drugs available that are equally effective?
- Are alternatives drugs available that are effective, but less costly?
- Is there a generic available for my brand name drug?
- Will this drug interact with other medications I take?

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