

Pravastatin

(Pravachol)

What is this medicine used for?

- This medicine is taken by mouth to lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels when diet and exercise alone have not lowered them enough.
- It may also be used for other conditions such as:
 - to reduce the risk of heart attack
 - to prevent stroke and other heart disease
 - to treat angina (chest pain).

What should my healthcare provider know before I take this medicine?

- Before taking this medicine, tell your healthcare provider if you have ever had:
 - an allergic reaction to any medicine
 - a thyroid disorder
 - kidney or liver disease
 - problems with alcohol abuse
 - seizures
 - unexplained muscle aches or weakness.
- Females of childbearing age: Do not take this medicine if you are pregnant because it may harm the baby. If you are pregnant, tell your healthcare provider. Do not become pregnant during treatment with this medicine. If you become pregnant, contact your healthcare provider right away. Do not breast-feed while you are taking this medicine.

How do I take it?

- Take it regularly every day. Do not change your dosage or stop taking this medicine without your healthcare provider's approval.
- You may take this medicine with or without food. Taking it with meals may lessen the chance the drug will upset your stomach.
- You need to follow a low-fat diet and a regular exercise program to help reduce your cholesterol level. Follow your healthcare provider's directions.
- If do you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for the next scheduled dose. In that case, skip the missed dose and take the next one as directed. Do not take double doses.

What should I watch out for?

- While you are taking this medicine, report any unusual muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness to your healthcare provider right away, especially if you also have a fever or feel ill.
- Your healthcare provider will want to see you regularly while you are taking this medicine. You will need blood tests to see if the medicine is working. You will also have liver function tests to see how the medicine may be affecting your liver. Keep all your appointments.
- You should stop taking this medicine a few days before surgery or certain other medical procedures. Discuss this with your healthcare provider.

What are the possible side effects?

- Life-threatening (Report these to your healthcare provider right away. If you cannot reach your healthcare provider right away, get emergency medical care or call 911 for help): Allergic reaction (hives; itching; rash; trouble breathing; tightness in your chest; swelling of your lips, tongue, and throat).
- Serious (report these to your healthcare provider right away): Chest pain; unusual muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, especially if you also have a fever or vision changes; yellowing of your skin or eyes; dark urine; pale stools.
- Other: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, urinary tract infection, gas, constipation, rash, itching, headache, dizziness, runny nose, fatigue, trouble sleeping.

What products might interact with this medicine?

- Talk to your healthcare provider if you are taking:
 - antacids such as Maalox TC (Take antacids 2 hours apart from doses of this medicine.)
 - antibiotics such as erythromycin (Erythromycin, E-Mycin, E.E.S., EryPed), clarithromycin (Biaxin), and telithromycin (Ketek)
 - cyclosporine (Sandimmune, Neoral, Gengraf)
 - nicotinic acid (niacin)
 - other cholesterol medicines such as cholestyramine (Questran, LoCHOLEST, Prevalite), colestipol (Colestid), fenofibrate (Lofibra, TriCor), and gemfibrozil (Lopid)
 - quinupristin/dalfopristin (Synercid)
 - St. John's wort
- Do not drink alcohol while you are taking this medicine without your healthcare provider's approval.