



Statin Medications

Using a research-based approach, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield chooses safe, effective statin medications for the drug list/formulary.

What are statins?

Statins help lower cholesterol levels in the blood. These drugs are very effective at lowering LDL – or bad cholesterol. High cholesterol puts you at risk for heart attack or stroke. And some statins have proven they can lower this risk.

Here's a list of statin medications:

- Altoprev (lovastatin extended release)
- Crestor (rosuvastatin)
- Lescol and Lescol XL (fluvastatin and fluvastatin extended release)
- Lipitor (atorvastatin)
- lovastatin (generic Mevacor)
- Mevacor (lovastatin)
- Pravachol (pravastatin)
- pravastatin (generic Pravachol)
- simvastatin (generic Zocor)
- Zocor (simvastatin)

Your doctor can determine if a statin is right for you. It's also important to take charge of your health. Quit smoking, exercise and maintain a healthy weight. Plus, control blood pressure and diabetes.

Who decides which statins are covered?

Our Pharmacy & Therapeutics (P&T) Committee includes a large group of doctors and pharmacists who are not employees of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield. This group and other professionals are responsible for the decisions surrounding our drug list/formulary – or list of covered medications. The P&T Committee reviews drugs for their safety, effectiveness and value. Statin medications on the drug list/formulary are selected as a result of these findings.



What does the research say about statins?

Although lowering LDL is important, the main goal of statin therapy is to prevent heart attack and stroke. A ✓ in this table means the drug is proven to be effective.

Medication Name	Prevents first heart attack	Prevents second heart attack	Prevents first stroke	Prevents second stroke
lovastatin and Mevacor	✓			
pravastatin and Pravachol	✓	✓		✓
simvastatin and Zocor		✓		✓
Lipitor	✓	✓	✓	✓
Crestor	✓		✓	

Choosing Statin Medications

Here's a step-by-step look at how the P&T Committee agreed on statins for the drug list/formulary. Our approach is unique because we put clinical review first. This means drug list/formulary decisions are based first on quality data, instead of cost.

Step 1: Clinical Review and Rating

First, the P&T Committee compared all statins by studying information from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and medical research. They also used a detailed report prepared by pharmacists about the medical research studies and how well each study was done. Then, based on the research, the committee rated how well each drug works. They learned that:

- A generic statin can effectively lower LDL for many people.
- Simvastatin is the most powerful generic in lowering LDL cholesterol.
- For people who can't take a generic statin or need very large decreases in LDL, Lipitor or Crestor may be other options.
- Lipitor and pravastatin prevent against first and second heart attacks.
- Pravachol and pravastatin have the lowest number of interactions with other drugs.
- All statins have about the same side effects, including muscle aches and weakness.

Step 2: Use and Cost Review

Next, the P&T Committee used Step 1 to determine which drugs are prescribed most often. After that, cost was considered. They found:

- Simvastatin and Lipitor are two of the most popular statins.
- Lovastatin, pravastatin, simvastatin, Crestor and Lipitor cost less for Anthem. This means they're also more affordable for you.

Step 3: Set Coverage Level

Finally, the P&T Committee discussed this information, decided which medications should be included on the drug list/formulary and set coverage levels.

Lower Cost (generics)	Moderate Cost	Higher Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · lovastatin · pravastatin · simvastatin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Crestor · Lipitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Altoprev · Lescol and Lescol XR · Mevacor · Pravachol · Zocor



Where can I get more information?

This website offers valuable information about lowering cholesterol.

American Heart Association

hearthub.org/hc-cholesterol.htm

HeartHub™ is the American Heart Association's consumer site for information, tools and resources about cardiovascular disease and stroke. This site provides information on managing cholesterol.

