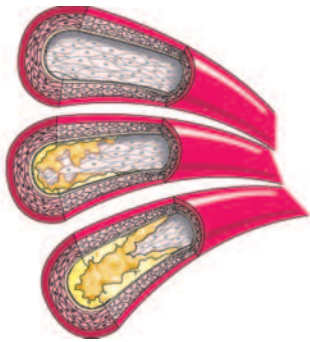




# TAKE WHAT YOU NEED TO HELP PREVENT HEART ATTACKS AND STROKES



## Do you have?

- Diabetes
- Peripheral Arterial Disease
- Heart Disease
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Stroke
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

**T**hese conditions are caused by or can lead to atherosclerosis. Atherosclerosis occurs when the lining of the arteries become damaged, causing fat-like deposits, called plaque, to build up in your artery walls. Over time, this build up of plaque can narrow the space inside the arteries and harden the walls of the blood vessels. Then it becomes harder for blood and oxygen to flow through.

Atherosclerosis can lead to a stroke or heart attack.

If the plaque builds up enough to block an artery in your heart, blood cannot reach the heart muscle. This lack of blood and oxygen can cause chest pain (angina) or a heart attack. More often, plaque cracks and a blood clot forms in the damaged area. The clot can block blood flow. If the artery bringing blood to the brain is blocked, a stroke occurs. If the artery in the heart is blocked, a heart attack occurs.

## Other risk factors and causes of atherosclerosis:

- smoking
- being overweight
- not getting enough physical activity
- high cholesterol
- high blood pressure

## Risk factors you cannot change:

- family history of heart disease
- older age (as you age, your risk goes up)

Here's the good news – there are ways to treat atherosclerosis and lessen your chances of having a stroke or heart attack.

## Consider medications:

1. Aspirin
2. Statins
3. ACE inhibitor
4. Beta blocker

Talk with your health care professional to find out if some or all of these medications are right for you.

## Make healthy lifestyle choices:

- Eat a heart-healthy, high-fiber diet.
- Be physically active for 30 minutes or more on most days of the week.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Quit using tobacco, if you do.

## What steps can you take now to take better care of your health?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Understanding your medications

It is important to understand how your medications work, possible side effects, and when and how you should take them. Most people have questions or concerns about medications they are currently taking or starting to take. Talk with your health care team to learn more about your medications. Here are some important questions to ask:

- Why am I taking this medication?
- When and how should I take this medicine?
- What are the possible side effects?
- If I notice a side effect, what should I do?
- Should I be taking this medication if I might become pregnant or if I already am pregnant?
- Other questions you may have:

---



---

## Taking other medications

Be careful of over-the-counter medication and herbal or weight loss supplements. Read the labels on the bottle or box carefully. Some over-the-counter medicines include warnings that they should not be used by people at risk for a heart attack or stroke. Let your health care professional know if you are taking any over-the-counter medicines.

Medications	My plan (Fill out with your health care professional.)
<p><b>ACE* Inhibitor</b> ACE inhibitors lower blood pressure by causing the blood vessels to relax and widen. This increases the supply of blood and oxygen to the heart and helps the heart beat more easily. Do not take this medication if you might become pregnant or if you are already pregnant.</p> <p><i>Other names:</i> lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril), captopril (Capoten) *Angiotensin Converting Enzyme</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>How much do I take (dose):</p> <p>How often do I take it:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><b>Beta-Blocker</b> Beta-blockers reduce the workload of the heart by relaxing the heart muscle and by slowing down the heart rate. This allows your heart to pump blood more easily. Beta-blockers are used to treat high blood pressure, heart failure, irregular heart beats, blocked coronary arteries, and angina. Talk with your doctor if you might become pregnant or you are already pregnant.</p> <p><i>Other names:</i> atenolol (Tenormin), metoprolol (Lopressor, Toprol), bisoprolol (Zebeta) carvedilol (Coreg)</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>How much do I take (dose):</p> <p>How often do I take it:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><b>Aspirin</b> Aspirin reduces the stickiness of blood cells, called platelets. This lowers the chances of platelets clumping together to form a blood clot. Clots can cause a blockage in your arteries and lead to a heart attack or stroke.</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>How much do I take (dose):</p> <p>How often do I take it:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><b>Statins</b> Statins work to lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol, which builds up in your artery walls, making them narrow. They also may help to prevent blood clots and inflammation inside your arteries. Do not take this medication if you might become pregnant or you are already pregnant.</p> <p><i>Other names:</i> lovastatin (Mevacor), simvastatin (Zocor), pravastatin (Pravachol)</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>How much do I take (dose):</p> <p>How often do I take it:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have further questions, please consult your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Kaiser Permanente does not endorse the medications or products mentioned. Any trade names listed are for easy identification only.