

## Ezetimibe (Zetia™)

In this session, we will be discussing the consumer medication information for ezetimibe, trade name Zetia™.

### What it's for & How to take

Ezetimibe is used to decrease the absorption of cholesterol in your small intestine. This medication is used, along with other treatments, to help decrease cholesterol.

You may have extra cholesterol over time from either overproduction or an increased intake. Extra cholesterol leads to a buildup of cholesterol inside your blood vessels. The buildup of cholesterol on a blood vessel wall hardens and is known as plaque. The inside of your vessels become narrow, and blood flow may be decreased.

As your blood vessel narrows, you will have a decreased supply of blood to the rest of your body. This narrowing of your blood vessels is called atherosclerosis. Next, if the plaque ruptures, it can form a clot which may lead to either a stroke or a heart attack.

Ezetimibe is usually taken once daily, with or without food. Take your medication at the same time each day. If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of your next dose, skip it and continue with your normal dose time. Do not take a double dose to make up the missed dose.

Depending on your specific therapy, your doctor may have you do some blood tests before you begin therapy and at regular intervals after you have started your ezetimibe. Do not miss your lab appointments. The blood work is done to make sure the medication is helping to lower the cholesterol and to see if your body is tolerating the medication.

### Warnings & Cautions

- If ezetimibe is taken with other medications used to treat cholesterol, the chance for side effects may increase. This combination may cause a condition associated with increasing muscle pain. This condition begins with muscle weakness, unusual tiredness and possibly a fever. You may also experience yellow eyes, dark urine, nausea or abdominal pain. This may cause muscle and liver damage if not acted upon. If you experience these side effects, contact your doctor immediately.
- Let your pharmacist or doctor know if you are pregnant or breastfeeding before taking this medication.

### Interactions & Side Effects

- Tell your pharmacist or doctor all your medication allergies so they may determine if ezetimibe is safe for you to take.
- Avoid dangerous drug interactions. Tell your pharmacist or doctor all the other medication you are taking, including over the counter supplements, even if you don't take them very often.
- Ask your doctor if this medication is safe to take with your current health conditions. Tell your doctor if you have a history of liver disease, kidney disease, muscle pain or weakness, thyroid disorder or a history of alcohol or substance abuse.
- While taking ezetimibe, you may feel some mild muscle pain, diarrhea, some nausea, slight dizziness or a cough. If these or any other unwanted side effects persist, contact your doctor or pharmacist to talk about it with them.
- Call your doctor right away if you have any significant muscle pain, unusual tiredness, weakness, fever, yellowing of your eyes, dark urine, nausea or abdominal pain.
- Call emergency 911 if you have any symptoms of a heart attack such as chest and left arm pain, shortness of breath and sweating or if you have symptoms of a stroke such as weakness on one side of your body, slurred speech, sudden vision changes, and confusion.

**TERMS OF USE:** These recordings are meant to supplement your knowledge and understanding of your medications and are not a replacement for counseling with your pharmacist or doctor. This information does not allow you to take a prescription medication that was not prescribed for you. Talk with your pharmacist or doctor before taking your medication and if you have any questions regarding your medication. **All information provided "as-is" and with no express or implied warranties, including warranties directed to accuracy, non-infringement of any proprietary rights or a third party or fitness for a particular purpose.**

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If you have any questions about what you have heard, contact your pharmacist or doctor. This session does not include all the potential interactions or side effects that this medication may cause. Ask your pharmacist how your medication should be stored and how you should dispose of it when you are done taking it. Do not share your medication with anyone, ever. Remember, this is not meant to replace your counseling session with your pharmacist. In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222.

Updated 11/16

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