

Inclisiran for managing high cholesterol: A guide for patients.

There are several tablets now available to lower cholesterol levels in the blood, including statins (e.g., atorvastatin, rosuvastatin and pravastatin), ezetimibe, bempedoic acid and icosapent ethyl.

If you can't take any of these medicines, or your cholesterol levels are still too high when you're taking them, your healthcare professional might talk to you about considering medicines which are injected, either instead of tablets or in addition to them.

Inclisiran (brand name Leqvio®) is one of the injectable medicines currently available for lowering cholesterol levels.

How inclisiran works:

Low density lipoprotein (LDL) is a substance in the body which carries cholesterol from the liver to cells that need it. LDL is sometimes known as "bad" cholesterol because high levels lead to fatty build-up inside the arteries, which increases the risk of heart disease (also known as cardiovascular disease, or CVD).

Inclisiran lowers the levels of a type of protein called PCSK9 in the cells of the liver, and by doing this increases the number of LDL-receptors. These receptors act as "dump trucks" to help get rid of LDL ("bad") cholesterol from the blood stream so that they can be broken down in the liver.

The less LDL cholesterol in the bloodstream, the lower your risk of major adverse cardiovascular events.

What inclisiran is used for:

Inclisiran is used in addition to your cholesterol-lowering diet if you are an adult with a high cholesterol level in your blood (primary hypercholesterolaemia, including heterozygous familial and non-familial, or mixed dyslipidaemia).

Inclisiran is given: - together with a statin (a type of medicine that treats high cholesterol), sometimes combined with another cholesterol-lowering treatment if the maximum dose of the statin does not work well enough, or - alone or together with other cholesterol-lowering medicines when statins do not work well or cannot be used.

How is inclisiran given?

Inclisiran is given as an injection under the skin and will be administered by your healthcare professional.

When you start treatment, you will be given a single injection, followed by another injection 3 months later. After these first two injections, inclisiran will be given every 6 months.

Treatment with inclisiran is intended to be long-term so will continue indefinitely unless you and your healthcare professional decide there is a reason to stop. It should also be taken alongside any other

cholesterol-lowering medicines that you are currently taking. Do not stop your statin or other cholesterol-lowering tablet unless you have been told to do so.

Important information

Inclisiran is a new-in-class drug, so it acts in a different way from all the other cholesterol-lowering drugs. It has its effect by reducing the gene expression of the PCSK9 protein. By reducing the expression of the PCSK9 protein, you have more LDL receptors to help remove LDL-C from your blood stream.

Possible side effects

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

Common (may affect up to 1 in 10 people) • Injection site reactions, such as pain, redness, or rash.

Reporting of side effects If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package information leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at: www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store. By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine

Where can I find more information?

The following resources are available online to download and access electronic versions, or your GP practice may send them to you in a link by text message, they are also available to order for free in hard copies.

This summary guide was adapted from “**A patient’s guide to Inclisiran (Leqvio®)**” produced by Novartis, April 2022. This full document can be found at:

<https://www.health.novartis.co.uk/resources-and-training/cardio-metabolic/product/inclisiran-resources/#dwell>

Package information leaflet for patients: [Leqvio, INN-inclisiran \(medicines.org.uk\)](http://Leqvio, INN-inclisiran (medicines.org.uk))

Further information on how cholesterol increases the risk of heart disease and how it can be managed can be found on these websites:

- Heart UK: The cholesterol charity www.heartuk.org.uk
- NHS Health A to Z www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-cholesterol/
- British Heart Foundation www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/risk-factors/high-cholesterol

Patient-focused resources from HEART UK:

- HEART UK have produced a helpful [animation](#), designed for patients, to better understand their cholesterol.
- They also have a range of diet quizzes - [All quizzes - HEART UK](#)