

Medicines for people who have had a heart attack



Your heart medicines — an important part of your treatment plan

Medicines may help keep your heart healthy after a heart attack. A heart attack occurs when one of the vessels that brings blood to the heart becomes blocked. You may have had a heart attack in the past. If so, your doctor most likely prescribed medicines for you to take. Medicines work together with lifestyle changes to treat heart problems. Some changes may include eating healthy and being active.

Learn about your heart medicines

Learning about your medicines can help you manage your health. The chart below lists some types of medicines for people who have had a heart attack. You may take more than one. Ask your doctor which medicines you are taking. Check off the ones that you are taking and write in the name.

Type of medicine

What the medicine does

Beta-blocker

My medicine: _____

- Slows the heartbeat and allows the heart to work with less force
- Lowers blood pressure
- Some help prevent chest pain (angina)
- Some help lower the risk for having another heart attack

Antiplatelet/anticoagulant medicine
(such as aspirin or clopidogrel)

My medicine: _____

- Helps thin the blood and prevents blood clots from forming (most often a heart attack is caused by a blood clot)

ACE inhibitor (angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor)

My medicine: _____

- Causes blood vessels to relax, which helps reduce strain on the heart
- Lowers blood pressure
- Lowers the risk for having another heart attack

ARB
(angiotensin II receptor blocker)

My medicine: _____

- Causes blood vessels to relax, which helps reduce strain on the heart
- Lowers blood pressure
- Lowers the risk for having another heart attack

Cholesterol-lowering medicine
(such as statins, resins, and niacin)

My medicine: _____

- Reduces the level of fats (cholesterol) in the blood that can block blood vessels

Ask your doctor about your medicines

Take your medicines as directed. This can help keep your heart healthy. Do not start or stop taking medicine without talking with your doctor first.