

Drug Profile: Lipitor

Overview

What is Lipitor?

Lipitor (atorvastatin) is a lipid-lowering agent. It belongs to a particular class of drugs known as statins. Atorvastatin is a substance that acts as an inhibitor of 3-hydroxy-3-methylglutaryl-coenzyme A (HMG-CoA) reductase. The enzyme acts as a catalyst in the conversion of HMG-CoA to mevalonate.

What is Lipitor used for?

Lipitor is used to reduce the amount of blood cholesterol. It reduces LDL cholesterol and facilitates growth of HDL cholesterol. Lipitor acts as a life saviour in patients with type 2 diabetes and heart problems.

How does Lipitor work?

Lipitor works by blocking the cholesterol producing enzyme called HMG-CoA reductase. This is responsible for the creation of LDL cholesterol. It gets into the cell walls of arteries after being released by the liver. When cholesterol deposits increase, they cause blockage in the arteries. Lipitor reduces the amount of LDL cholesterol by lowering the number of cholesterol producing enzymes. It is difficult to ascertain how long does Lipitor stay in the bloodstream. It varies from patient to patient.

****What Lipitor dosage forms are available?**

Lipitor is available in _____ (e.g. tablet) form in the following strengths:

e.g <drug name> ____ mg

<drug name> ____ mg

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How to Use

Lipitor is usually taken once a day with a full glass of water. However, the dosage varies from person to person. It should be taken as prescribed by the doctor. Taking an overdose can cause serious health problems. It can be taken with or without food.

It is essential to get the blood tested regularly. Following a good diet and an exercise schedule are equally important.

Warnings and Precautions

Before taking Lipitor, be sure that you are not allergic to statins. Taking alcohol along with Lipitor can increase triglyceride levels. Grapefruit should also be avoided as their interaction can raise the amount of medications in the bloodstream.

Person taking Lipitor should also avoid foods that have high cholesterol content. The drug can cause serious birth defects in foetus if taken during pregnancy. Also, breast feeding should not be done while taking Lipitor.

Misdose

What do I do if I miss a Lipitor dose?

If you have missed your Lipitor dose you can take the missed dose anytime but not immediately before the next scheduled dose.

What do I do if I have taken a Lipitor overdose?

An overdose of Lipitor does not produce serious consequences. However, if you have taken a Lipitor overdose you should immediately seek medical attention.

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Drug Interactions

Adhere to the instructions of the doctor or pharmacist. Also, monitor your consumption. This can help avoid any possible drug interactions. Starting, stopping or changing the dosage before consulting a doctor can cause serious ailments. Lipitor should not be taken with some medicines because the interaction can lead to serious consequences. These medications include:

- telithromycin, aliskiren, clopidogrel, daptomycin, digoxin
- Drugs affecting liver enzymes that remove Lipitor
- Some macrolide antibiotics
- Certain HIV protease inhibitors or AIDS medication
- Drugs that make the immune system grow weak.

Side Effects

There are some minor side effects of Lipitor. These include mild nausea, constipation, stomach pain, stuffy nose, itching or skin rash. The drug causes severe muscle pain and uncontrolled weight gain.

Lipitor side effects also include loss of appetite, dark urine, jaundice or flu symptoms. It can also cause allergic reactions such as hives, severe dizziness, face swelling or difficulty in breathing.

Bruising or unusual bleeding is one of the side effects of Lipitor. The drug can also cause some other unusual side effects that include sexual dysfunction, memory loss and personality changes.