

# Your guide to inclisiran and cholesterol



This leaflet is not intended to replace the patient information leaflet that comes with your medicine, which contains important information that may be useful for future reference

## What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a type of blood fat which is made in the liver. It's found in some foods too.

Healthy levels are controlled by the liver, which makes most of our cholesterol and also breaks it down. Cholesterol plays a key role in how your body works. It is needed to help cells work, make bile to help you digest food, and make vitamin D and hormones.

Too much cholesterol, however, can be harmful. It can increase the risk of heart disease, which affects the heart and blood vessels.

There are two types of cholesterol carried in the blood:

### LDL cholesterol

LDL cholesterol is often called 'bad cholesterol' because too much of it can clog up your arteries and lead to health problems, such as heart disease, heart attacks and strokes. You do need some LDL cholesterol in your blood. It is when there is too much that it's a problem.

### HDL cholesterol

HDL cholesterol is often called 'good cholesterol' because it carries 'bad' cholesterol away from your cells, back to your liver to be broken down. So, it helps prevent disease.

## How to check if you have high cholesterol

High cholesterol does not cause symptoms. A blood test is the only way to find out whether your cholesterol levels are higher than they should be.

A cholesterol test can be done by:

- Taking blood from your arm with a needle.

This is sent to a lab to check your cholesterol level. You should get the result in a few days.

You might be asked not to eat anything for up to 12 hours before the test, but this is not always needed.

- Finger-prick test. If you are over 40, you may have a test during your [NHS Health Check](#). You can also get this check at the pharmacy.

A drop of blood is put on a strip of paper. This is put into a machine that checks your cholesterol in a few minutes.



## How to lower cholesterol

Check [NHS Choices](#) for ways to lower your cholesterol



### Diet and lifestyle

- Eating less fatty food and exercising more will help reduce your cholesterol
- Stop smoking – smoking can raise your cholesterol. You can get support from your GP or the [NHS Stop Smoking Service](#) – your GP can refer you or you can ring the helpline on 0300 123 1044
- Cut down on alcohol- ask your GP for help and advice if you are struggling to cut down.

### Medicine to lower your cholesterol

You may need medicine to lower cholesterol if:

- Your cholesterol levels have not gone down after changing your diet and lifestyle
- You are at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke

[Statins](#) are the most common medicine for high cholesterol. You take a tablet once a day and usually need to take them for life.

Other medicines may be used if statins do not work, or you do not want to take statins, these include:

- Other tablets- such as [ezetimibe](#), fibrates, bile acid sequestrants (also called resins) and [bempedoic acid](#)
- Injections- such as [alirocumab](#), [evolocumab](#) and [inclisiran](#)

### What is inclisiran?

Inclisiran is a medicine for people with high cholesterol, or both high cholesterol and triglycerides, that's not being reduced enough with other medicines, such as [statins](#), [ezetimibe](#), or [bempedoic acid](#).

Triglycerides are a type of blood fat, if you have too much in your blood, this can raise the risk of heart disease.

Inclisiran is a medicine used to lower the levels of cholesterol in the blood. It is given to people with high levels of cholesterol whether or not it's caused by a genetic condition.

**Your GP has identified you as being someone who may benefit from inclisiran.**

**You should continue to take your current medication, such as [statins](#),**

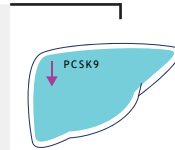
**ezetimibe, or bempedoic acid, as prescribed by your doctor and eat a healthy, low-fat diet along with having an inclisiran injection.**

Inclisiran is only approved for use in adults. It can only be prescribed by doctors and other health professionals, such as a nurse or pharmacist, and cannot be purchased over the counter.

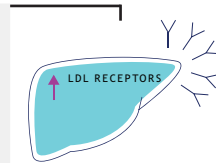
### **How does inclisiran work?**

Inclisiran has been shown to be effective in lowering LDL-C (low-density lipoprotein- cholesterol). The diagram below shows how inclisiran lowers cholesterol.

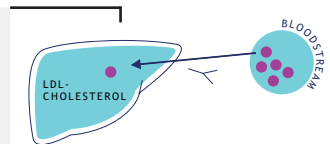
**Inside the liver inclisiran lowers the levels of protein called PCSK9**



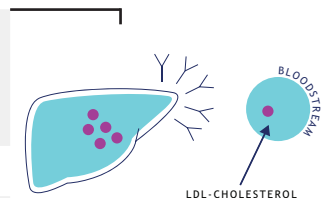
**This increases the number of LDL receptors that sit on the surface of liver cells. LDL receptors may be thought of as 'doorways' to the cell**



**LDL receptors allow LDL-cholesterol to move from the blood to the inside of the liver to be broken down**



**More LDL receptors on the surface of the liver means more LDL-cholesterol can be let inside the liver, where it is broken down and removed from the body**

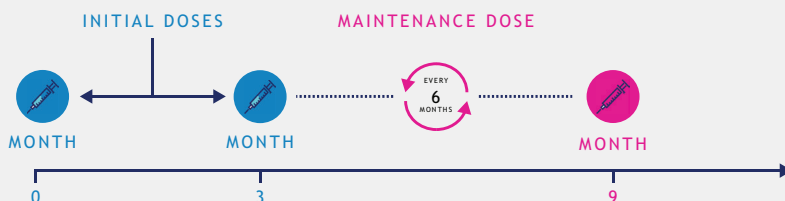


**This means there is less LDL-cholesterol in the blood and the risk of build up in the arteries is reduced**

## How will you be given inclisiran?

Inclisiran is given as an injection under the skin, by your healthcare professional. This could be a pharmacist, nurse or doctor.

It is usually given in the abdomen (the tummy area) but can also be given in the upper arm or the thigh (top of the leg). If you have any sunburn, skin rashes or infections, this area should be avoided.



## How often will you have inclisiran?

Inclisiran is given as a single injection when you start treatment, then another 3 months later. After these initial injections, inclisiran is given every 6 months.

**You should continue to take any other medicines, including cholesterol-lowering medications (statins, ezetimibe or bempedoic acid), as advised by your pharmacist, nurse or doctor.**

Treatment with inclisiran is intended to be ongoing rather than being given for a certain amount of time.

If you have any concerns about your treatment, please talk to your pharmacist, nurse or doctor.

## Safety and side effects

Completed research for inclisiran showed there were **no severe or continuous reactions and did not raise any safety concerns.**

However, research into the long-term effects of inclisiran, such as if it reduces heart attacks or strokes, are on-going. This will become available in 2026 or 2027.

Because the long-term research is still ongoing inclisiran has a black triangle symbol (▼), this means any side effects have to be reported. This is the normal process for new medicines.

See [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard) for how to report side effects.

Like all medicines, some mild / moderate side effects may be experienced with inclisiran. The most common side effects are mild redness and a rash on the area where the injection was given.

## Pregnancy and breast-feeding

As there is limited information about using inclisiran during pregnancy, you should tell your pharmacist, nurse or doctor if you are pregnant or are planning to become pregnant.

It is preferable to avoid having inclisiran if you are pregnant. We do not know if inclisiran is present in human milk. If you are breast-feeding, speak with your pharmacist, nurse or doctor.

## Other considerations

Inclisiran is not expected to affect other medicines that you may be taking.

**Continue to take your statins, ezetimibe or bempedoic acid.**

Inclisiran should not affect your ability to drive or use machinery

## Check list

	<b>I have spoken with my pharmacist, nurse or doctor about...</b>	<b>Tick box when complete</b>
1.	My current treatment (statins, exetimibe, or ezetimibe with bempedoic acid) and why i need to continue to take these as well as having inclisiran	
2.	Lifestyle and diet measures to help reduce my cholesterol	
3.	How often i have inclisiran	
4.	Long term safety data for inclisiran	
5.	Potential side effects	

## Notes

