



NATIONAL
MINORITY QUALITY
FORUM



Sticking with Treatment



Staying on Track With Your Treatment

Why some people stop taking their cholesterol meds

A lot of people **stop taking their cholesterol medicine**, even when it's working. There are a few common reasons why. For some folks, **the cost becomes a problem**, especially with newer medications. Others may feel side effects and start to worry the medicine is doing more harm than good. There's also a lot of mixed information online, and it can be **hard to know what's real and what's not**.

Another big reason people stop is simple: they feel okay. The tricky part is that high cholesterol doesn't come with warning signs. You can feel fine, go about your day, and still have numbers that put you at risk for a **heart attack or stroke**. When you stop your meds, that risk goes right back up, **even if nothing feels different**.

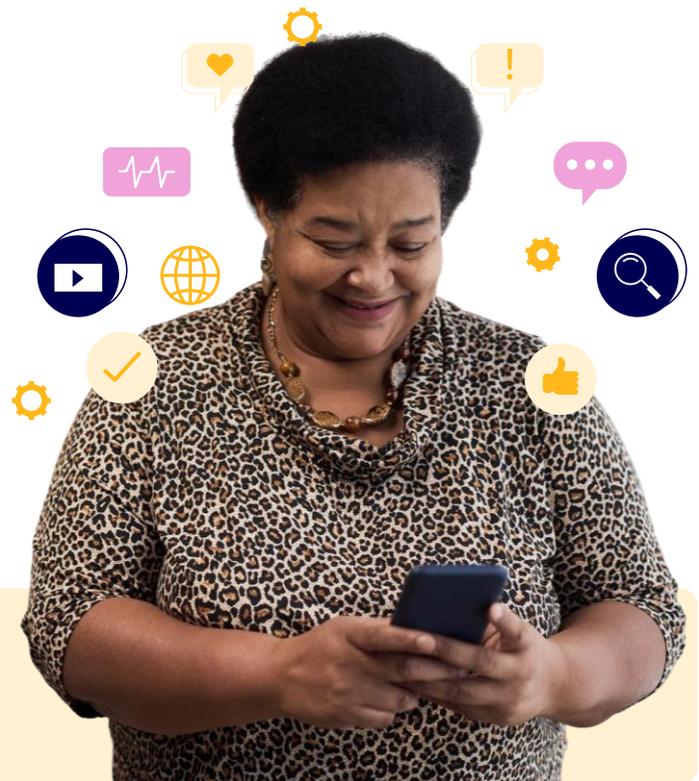
That's why taking your medication regularly matters. These medicines protect your heart quietly, working in the background every single day.

Habits that make it easier to stay consistent

Getting used to a daily medication can take time, but a few small habits can make a big difference:

-  **Set a daily phone reminder** so you don't have to rely on memory.
-  **Use a pill organizer** to keep track of what you've taken.
-  **Keep your meds where you'll see them**, like near your toothbrush, coffee maker, or nightstand.
-  **Link your meds to something you already do every day**, like brushing your teeth, eating breakfast, or getting ready for bed.

The goal is to make taking your medicine part of your regular routine, not something you have to think hard about.

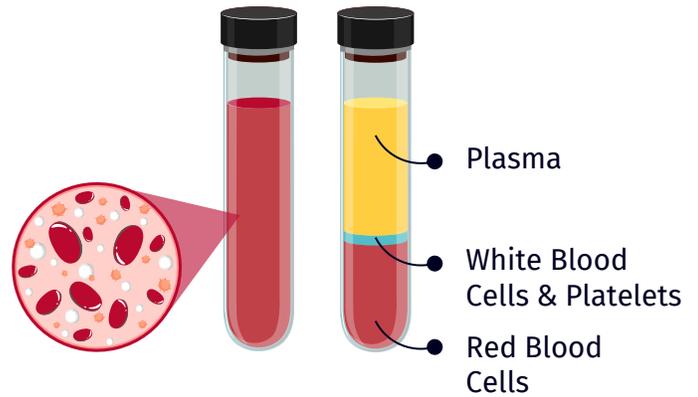


Staying on track over time

Why routine labs are key

Even when you feel good, it's important to get your cholesterol checked regularly. Lab tests are the only way to know if your treatment is really working. Cholesterol doesn't cause pain or symptoms, so labs help catch problems early and prevent surprises.

Think of lab work as a check-in, not bad news, just information to help you stay on top of your health.



Tracking your progress

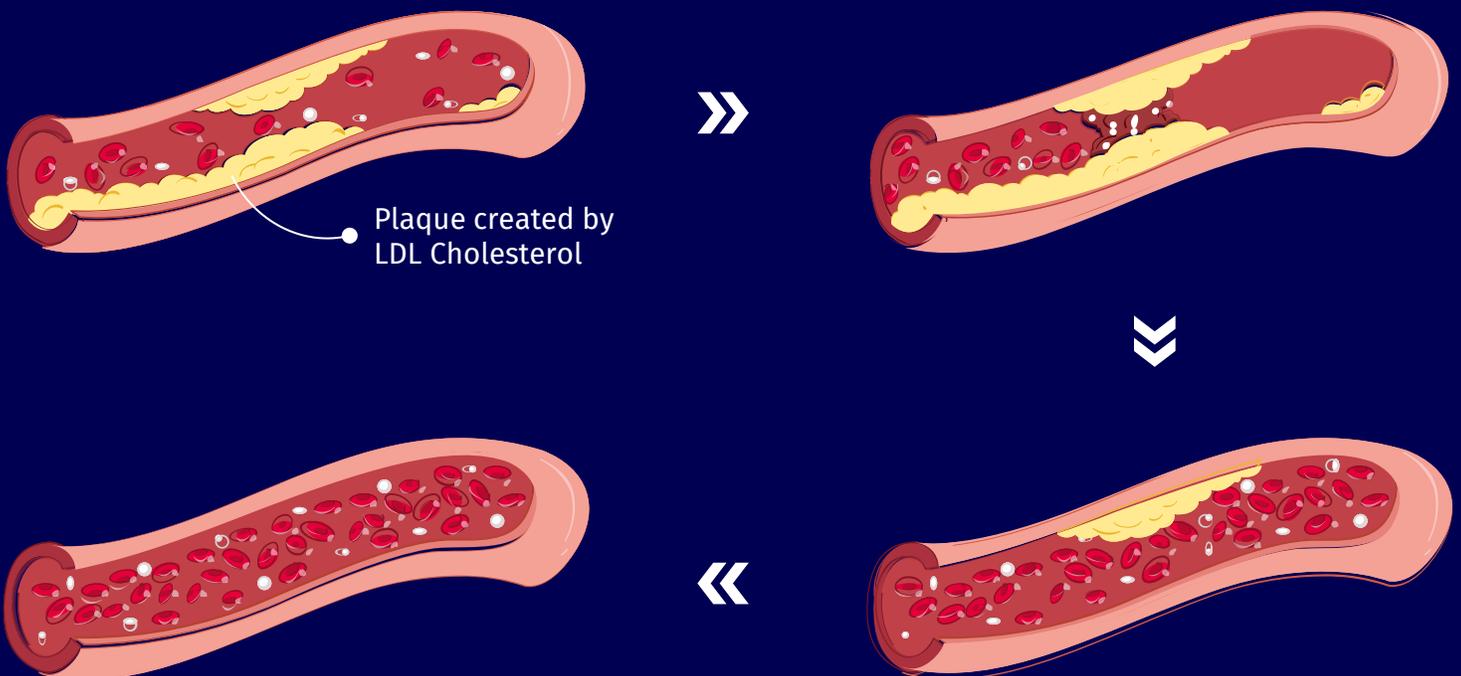
Keeping track of your numbers helps you stay motivated and informed. You can use:

-  A notebook
-  A notes app on your phone
-  Printed lab results from your doctor

Watching your LDL go down, even little by little, shows that your efforts are paying off.

Celebrate the wins

Every drop in LDL matters. Every improvement counts. Progress doesn't have to be perfect to be powerful. Take pride in the steps you're taking to protect your heart.



Lift Every Voice: Real-life experiences

Story 1

A man in his 50s found out he had high cholesterol and a strong family history of heart disease. He made changes to his diet, started moving more, and took his medication every day. His numbers improved, and because he felt fine, he stopped taking the medicine without checking in with his doctor. At his next lab visit, his LDL had gone right back up. His doctor explained that the medicine was still needed to keep his cholesterol under control. He restarted his treatment and now stays consistent because he understands what's at stake.

Story 2

A woman had high cholesterol her whole life. Diet changes and exercise helped, but not enough. Statins caused muscle pain, so she stopped taking them and her cholesterol climbed even higher. A specialist later found she had a genetic condition affecting her cholesterol. She was started on a different medication that worked better for her body, and her numbers finally came down. Her experience shows that there's no one-size-fits-all treatment, and that help is available.

When to call your doctor

Most cholesterol medications are safe, but you should call your doctor if you notice:

 Strong or lasting muscle pain

 Extreme tiredness or weakness

 Dark-colored urine

 Yellowing of the skin or eyes

 Pain in the upper right side of your stomach

Don't stop your medicine on your own. Your doctor can adjust the dose, switch medications, or help find an option that works better for you.

You're in control

Sticking with your treatment is one of the strongest ways to protect your heart. Even if you can't feel it working, the benefits are happening inside your body every day. By taking your meds, getting regular labs, tracking your progress, and speaking up when you need help, you're taking charge of your health.

**Your heart matters.
And staying consistent is an
investment in your future.**

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