

**NATURAL  
ALTERNATIVES  
TO  
STATINS**

**Edited by**

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**(2009)**

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**IMPORTANT**

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**Overview**

The statins (or HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors) are a class of drugs that lower cholesterol levels in people with, or who are at risk of, cardiovascular disease.

Statins lower cholesterol by inhibiting the enzyme HMG-CoA reductase, which is the rate-limiting enzyme of the mevalonate pathway of cholesterol synthesis.

If you are worried about cholesterol, and you want to reduce it without chemical medication, here are some natural recommendations from recent research into natural alternatives to statins:

- Eat foods containing high levels of beta-sitosterol, which is found in most plants - especially soybeans. This can reduce cholesterol by at least 10 per cent (Ann Nutr Metab, 1995; 39: 291-5)
- Take omega-3 fatty-acid supplements, preferably with vitamin B6 (Circulation, 2002; 105: 1897-903)
- Eat a high-fibre diet based on vegetables, fruits, and nuts (Metabolism, 2001; 50: 494-503); oat bran, apple pectin, and psyllium are especially helpful (Am J Clin Nutr, 1979; 32: 346-63)
- Take up to 3000 mg/day of niacin, but beware of overdosing (Curr Cardiol Rep, 2003; 5: 470-6)

- Try blue-green algae supplements - they contain large amounts of polyunsaturated fatty acids which may reduce cholesterol (Proceedings of the American Chemical Society meeting, March 1999)
- Do not forget garlic (*Allium sativum*), which lowers cholesterol (Ann Intern Med, 1993; 119: 599-605)

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