

# Why You Should Take CoQ10 if You Take a Statin Drug

## Importance of CoQ10

CoQ10 (ubiquinone or coenzyme Q10) is essential for energy production in the mitochondria of each cell in the body and antioxidant repair.<sup>1</sup> Lowering CoQ10 levels decrease the amount of energy and antioxidants available to cells in the body and therefore increases the risk of damage to cells.

Mitochondrial energy disorders associated with low CoQ10 levels include:

- Muscle damage and pain<sup>2</sup>
- chronic heart failure (CHF)<sup>3 4 5</sup>
- Myalgic encephalomyelitis and chronic fatigue syndrome (ME & CFS)<sup>6</sup>
- Depression<sup>7</sup>
- Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, AML (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), Friedreich's ataxia<sup>8</sup>
- Low sperm count and motility, Preeclampsia in pregnancy<sup>9</sup>
- Migraine headaches<sup>10 11</sup>
- Vertigo and Meniere-like syndrome<sup>12</sup>
- Sudden sensorineural hearing loss<sup>13</sup>
- Gum disease and periodontitis<sup>14</sup>

CoQ10 is essential for many normal processes in body. The following information concentrates on the heart, blood vessel and muscle issues associated with statin drug use.

## Statin Side Effects

The East Texas Medical Center states, "...*statin-related side effects, including statin cardiomyopathy (heart muscle damage), are far more common than previously published.*" Statin treatment side effects include heart damage, muscle pain, fatigue, breathing problems, memory loss and nerve damage in the toes and fingers.<sup>15</sup>

## Statins Lower CoQ10

Statins inhibit synthesis of mevalonate, a precursor of both cholesterol and coenzyme Q (CoQ) via 3-hydroxy-3-methylglutaryl coenzyme A reductase inhibition. Decreasing mevalonate lowers cholesterol and CoQ10 levels in the body.<sup>16</sup> Human medical research studies demonstrate statin drugs may lower CoQ10 blood levels by 7.7 to 42%.<sup>17 18 19 20</sup> Statin treatment also decreases CoQ10 levels in the heart and muscles.<sup>21 22</sup> Statins can lower CoQ10 levels within 14 days.<sup>23</sup>

## Statins Affect Muscles

Statin drugs reduce cholesterol concentrations and have been associated with muscle problems<sup>24</sup> including muscle weakness, cramps, pain and damage.<sup>25 26</sup> Statin associated muscle problems may affect 10% to 15% of the patients taking this class of medications.<sup>27</sup> Muscle problems increase with increasing statin dose and increasing physical activity.<sup>28</sup>

## CoQ10 Supplements Decrease Side Effects

A 30-day study demonstrated CoQ10 decreased muscle pain associated with statin treatment. CoQ10 supplement decreased pain severity by 40% and pain interference with daily activities by 38%. In contrast, patients who received a placebo, pain severity increased 9%.<sup>29</sup>

Statin therapy worsened diastolic heart function in most patients. CoQ10 improved the diastolic heart function in the patients taking a statin drug.<sup>30</sup> In another study CoQ10 improved heart function in patients with diabetes taking a statin drug.<sup>31</sup>

Patients that discontinued statin therapy due to side effects and took 240 mg of CoQ10 per day experienced decreased fatigue, decreased muscle pain, improved breathing, improved memory, and decreased numbness and pain in the toes and fingers.<sup>32</sup>

## Quality of CoQ10

CoQ10 is absorption can vary depending on the dosage form and quality of the product used.<sup>33</sup> You should contact your health care provider for assistance in selecting a quality CoQ10 product and an appropriate dose. This is one dietary supplement that absolutely follows the age old wise saying: "*You get what you pay for.*" You should not gamble with an inferior CoQ10 product if you take a statin drug or suspect damage from a statin drug.



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