

## Taking your pills to protect your heart and prevent another heart attack

### What is the Benefit for You?

The following medications have been shown to help prevent another heart attack when taken in combination. These benefits are on top of the effects of the **heart-healthy lifestyle changes** listed on the previous page, regardless of whether or not you have high cholesterol or high blood pressure. Some of these pills are recommended as life-long treatments, although some people are not able to tolerate taking all of them.

**Review the benefits and risks for each with your health care provider to determine what is best for you.**

On average, your risk of a second heart attack within the next 10 years is about **30%**. This means that if there were 20 people just like you, about 6 of them would have another heart attack (**red sad faces**) and 14 would not (happy faces).



<b>Life Saving Drugs following a Heart Attack – Risk Reduction for a Second Heart Attack</b> 😊=did not have a heart attack; 😊 = avoided a heart attack by taking their medication; 😞 = heart attack, despite taking medications.		
<b>Aspirin (ASA)</b> Works by preventing blood clots.	If these 20 people took <b>aspirin</b> , only about 4 of them might have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> heart attack, instead of 6.	
<b>Statins*</b> Prevents your liver from making too much cholesterol and reduces blood vessel inflammation.	If these 20 people took a <b>statin</b> , only about 4 of them might have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> heart attack, instead of 6.	
<b>Beta-Blockers*</b> Help your heart beat more slowly and lower blood pressure.	If these 20 people took a <b>beta-blocker</b> , only about 4 of them might have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> heart attack, instead of 6.	
<b>ACE inhibitors*</b> Help your heart pump better and lower blood pressure	If these 20 people took an <b>ACE inhibitor</b> , only about 5 of them might have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> heart attack, instead of 6.	
<b>Dual Antiplatelet Therapy</b> ASA and a P2Y <sub>12</sub> inhibitor** lower your risk of clots in the blood vessels of the heart.	If these 20 people took <b>Dual Antiplatelet Therapy</b> , only about 5 of them might have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> heart attack, instead of 6.	
You will get the <b>most benefit</b> if you take the recommended <b>4 pills</b> (ASA, Statin, Beta-Blocker and ACE inhibitor). While we don't know exactly how much the combination reduces the risk of a heart attack, some <i>estimates</i> suggest that if 20 people as above <b>took all 4 pills</b> , only <b>2</b> of them <i>might</i> have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> heart attack, instead of 6.		

\*Benefit even if you have normal cholesterol or blood pressure; \*\*ASA + Clopidogrel (or Ticagrelor or Prasugrel)

**It is important that you do not stop taking any medication without first consulting with your doctor or health care provider. If you experience side effects, or are concerned, let them know.**

**Adapted from: 1)** “Why Am I Taking So Many Pills After My Heart Attack”. Jorgenson D. Health Quality Council. Saskatchewan. 2005-2008. [www.hqc.sk.ca](http://www.hqc.sk.ca); **2)** UpToDate, Patient Information: Heart Attack Recovery (Beyond the Basics) 2014. [www.uptodate.com](http://www.uptodate.com).

