



As a network, we have seen a surprising number of pharmacy claims for branded or expensive statins. These high cost agents include: **Altoprev[®]**, **Crestor[®]**, **Lipitor[®]**, **Livalo[®]**, **Zocor[®]**, and even though generic, **fluvastatin** and **fluvastatin ER**.

We encourage providers to utilize generic statins for all patients given the abundance of data supporting their safety and efficacy. If you have a patient that has had trouble with statin intolerance, the AHP Pharmacy Team (AHPPharmacist@URMC.Rochester.edu) is available to recommend trials of different statins and alternative dosing schedules to hopefully find one that works for each patient. You can also refer to AHP's statin-associated muscle symptom (SAMS) algorithm, found [here](#). As they say, some statin is better than none!

Statin comparison

As a reminder, statins are classified as low, moderate, or high intensity based on their potency in LDL reduction.

Within each category, there is no data to suggest that one statin is more effective than the others.

	Low intensity (LDL lowering <30%)	Moderate intensity (LDL lowering 30-50%)	High intensity (LDL lowering >50%)	Approximate cost/Rx*
Fluvastatin	20-40 mg	40 mg BID; XL 80 mg	--	\$102.74 (generic IR) \$156.72 (generic ER)
Lovastatin	20 mg	40 mg	--	\$6.15 (generic) \$873.78 (brand Altoprev[®])
Pravastatin	10-20 mg	40-80 mg	--	\$6.34 (generic) \$492.74 (brand Pravachol[®])
Pitavastatin	1 mg	2-4 mg	--	\$254.71 (brand Livalo[®] only)
Simvastatin	10 mg	20-40 mg	--	\$4.56 (generic) \$242.56 (brand Zocor[®])
Atorvastatin	--	10-20 mg	40-80 mg	\$8.11 (generic) \$370.98 (brand Lipitor[®])
Rosuvastatin	--	5-10 mg	20-40 mg	\$22.57 (generic) \$186.12 (brand Crestor[®])

*Estimated cash price for 30-day RX. Cost varies based on pharmacy, dose, day supply and patient's insurance coverage.

Drug interactions and muscle symptoms

- Statins metabolized by the CYP enzyme system (simvastatin, lovastatin, atorvastatin) are more likely to interact with other medications
- Pravastatin and rosuvastatin are less likely to have drug interactions
 - These agents are hydrophilic and can't penetrate muscle tissue as easily as lipophilic statins

Additional benefits of select generic statins

	Dose any time of day	↓TG	↑HDL
Rosuvastatin	X	X	X
Atorvastatin	X	X	
Pravastatin	X		

Pharmacy Pearls

Fibrates for the Management of Hypertriglyceridemia

What do the guidelines say?^{1,2}

The 2018 ACC/AHA Guideline on the Management of Blood Cholesterol defines hypertriglyceridemia (HTG) as either **moderate (fasting or non-fasting TG 150-499 mg/dL)** or **severe (fasting TG >500 mg/dL)**

- Persistently elevated TGs are classified as a risk enhancer which supports initiation or intensification of statin therapy but RCTs do not support fibrates as add-on drugs to statins to reduce ASCVD risk.
- Although statins can reduce TG, they cannot prevent acute hypertriglyceridemic pancreatitis alone, this is when treatment with omega-3 fatty acids and fibrates becomes helpful.
- Treatment with omega-3 fatty acids or fibrates should not replace statin therapy as decreasing TG alone has not demonstrated reduced ASCVD risk.

Category of HTG	Elevated lipoprotein(s)	Goal	Treatment
Moderate (TG 150-499 mg/dL)	VLDL (atherogenic, similar to LDL)	Reduce VLDL and ASCVD risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address secondary causes of elevated TG • Statin therapy (initiate or intensify) • Could consider Vascepa® as an adjunct to maximally tolerated statin
Severe (TG ≥500 mg/dL)	VLDL and chylomicrons (increased risk of acute pancreatitis)	Reduce VLDL and ASCVD risk as well as risk of acute pancreatitis	<p>Above <i>plus consider</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very low fat diet • Avoid refined carbohydrates and alcohol • Omega-3 fatty acids • Fibrates

Cost-Effective Fibrate Formulations

- Fibrates come in a variety of dosage forms and they can vary in terms of cost. Depending on the dosage form and strength, the average monthly cost can range from \$10-\$730!
- Though it varies based on specific dose prescribed and patient's insurance coverage, fenofibrate tablets (48 mg, 54 mg, 145 mg, and 160 mg) are *generally* less expensive than the micronized capsules or the choline fenofibrate tablets/DR capsules.
- As a reminder, gemfibrozil tends to be inexpensive but is more likely to cause drug interactions than fenofibrate.
- Consider preferentially prescribing fenofibrate 48 mg, 54 mg, 145 mg, or 160 mg tablets if fibrate therapy is deemed necessary.