

# Statins for primary prevention of cardiovascular diseases

Numbers for people aged 40 years and older who either took a placebo or statins and were observed on average for 3 years (between 6 months and 6 years). They showed a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. However, they had not experienced a cardiovascular event (e.g. heart attack) thus far.

	<b>100 people who took a placebo</b>	<b>100 people who took statins</b>
<b>Benefits</b>		
How many people had a heart attack?	2	1
How many people had a stroke?	2	1
How many people died from cardiovascular events?	2	1
How many people died overall?	4	3
<b>Harms</b>		
How many people experienced severe adverse events*?	13	13
How many people experienced muscle pain (myalgia) or muscle weakness as a possible adverse event?	9	9
How many patients developed type 2 diabetes as an adverse event?	3	3

\*Adverse events were life-threatening, fatal, led to permanent disabilities, led to (prolonged) hospital stays, or were cancer diagnoses.

**Short summary:** Statins lowered the number of people who died from cardiovascular disease and who died overall. Heart attacks and stroke occurred less often. There was no difference in the number of adverse events experienced.

Sources: Chou et al. *JAMA* 2016;316(19):2008-24.