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PRAVASTATIN - ORAL

OTHER NAMES: Pravachol

USES: This medication is used to lower high cholesterol levels in the blood and can help prevent coronary atherosclerosis (blockage of the heart's arteries) to reduce the risk of heart attack.

For best results this medication should be used along with exercise and a low cholesterol/low fat diet.

HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICATION: This medication may be taken without regard to meals. If you are taking this drug once daily, take it with the evening meal or at bedtime as directed.

It may take a few weeks to months before the full effects of this medication are noticed.

This drug must be taken regularly to keep cholesterol low.

SIDE EFFECTS: Stomach upset, gas, heartburn, change of taste, diarrhea, constipation, skin rash, headache, dizziness or blurred vision may occur the first few days as your body adjusts to the medication. If these effects persist or become bothersome, inform your doctor.

Notify MD promptly if you experience muscle cramps, fever, unusual tiredness or weakness, vision changes or yellowing eyes and skin.

If this medication makes you dizzy or lightheaded, avoid driving or engaging in activities requiring alertness.

Consult with your doctor about using alcohol while taking this medication.

PRECAUTIONS: Tell your doctor your medical history, especially any liver, kidney or heart disease, a history of alcoholism, low thyroid function or any allergies, especially drug allergies.

Limit alcohol intake, as this may aggravate drug side effects.

This drug should not be used during pregnancy. If you become pregnant or think you may be pregnant, inform your doctor immediately.

This drug is excreted into breast milk. Due to the possible serious harm this drug may cause to a child, avoid breast-feeding while using this drug. Consult your doctor and pharmacist.

DRUG INTERACTIONS: Tell your doctor of any over-the-counter or prescription medication you may take including warfarin,

cyclosporine, erythromycin, gemfibrozil, cholestyramine, niacin and azole antifungals (e.g., itraconazole).

NOTES: Your doctor may periodically perform lab tests during treatment to evaluate the effectiveness of the medication.

MISSED DOSE: If you miss a dose, take it as soon as remembered; do not take if it is almost time for the next dose. Instead, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not "double-up" the doses.

STORAGE: Store at room temperature between 59 and 86 degrees F (between 15 and 30 degrees C) away from moisture and heat. Do not store in the bathroom.