

Cholesterol Medication and Muscle Weakness



by Julie O'Connell Seamer

Statins, a popular set of medication used to lower cholesterol can result in muscle weakness, pain, debilitating and even life threatening muscle damage.

The Journal of Clinical Investigation offers evidence that a gene known as *astrogom-1* plays a key role in statin-related muscle toxicity. Statins such as Lipitor, Zocor, Pavacol and Mevacor lower cholesterol but they may also activate this gene. Three separate tests showed that at even low concentrations, statin drugs led to *astrogom-1* induced muscle damage. As the concentration increased, the damage increased as well.

This new may be somewhat alarming for those seeking to increase muscle mass, or rely on their physicality and are also taking cholesterol medication. There is no argument that these drugs do work well at lowering high cholesterol levels. However there are other, far-reaching ways to treat the cause of the problem, particularly nutritional supplements and identifying any other underlying risk factors to cardio vascular disease risk.

Tips to control cholesterol naturally:

- * normalise insulin levels by eliminating sugars and grains
- * take a high quality therapeutic grade fish oil that has optimal DHA/EPA levels with no added fillers and excipients
- * check your iron levels as elevated iron in the blood can cause oxidative damage in blood vessels, heart and other organs
- * exercise regularly

In men, muscle weakness can also be a symptom of male menopause, otherwise known as andropause. 40% of men in their 40s, 50s and 60s experience loss of muscle mass, increased lethargy, irritability, mood swings and difficulty attaining or sustaining an erection - all factors influenced or caused by this andropause.

If you experience symptoms of muscle weakness such as flaccidity, loss of strength and are taking statin medication, or are male 40-60yrs (or your partner/father/brother/friend fits this category) there could be an explanation beyond general ageing/physiology.

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Male hormonal profiles are available through functional testing labs and are an effective gauge in monitoring what is happening with your body, at any life stage. Ask me for more details if you this of interest to you, in your path to optimal wellbeing.

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