

Ezetimibe for treating primary heterozygous-familial and non-familial hypercholesterolaemia

Information for the public

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What has NICE said?

Ezetimibe (Ezetrol) on its own is recommended as a possible treatment for adults with primary (heterozygous-familial or non-familial) hypercholesterolaemia who cannot start statin therapy because:

- it is not suitable for them or
- they cannot tolerate it.

Ezetimibe is recommended as a possible additional treatment for adults with primary (heterozygous-familial or non-familial) hypercholesterolaemia who have already started statin therapy if:

- their serum total or low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol concentration is not well controlled and

- a change from this statin to another statin is being considered.

What does this mean for me?

If you have primary (heterozygous-familial or non-familial) hypercholesterolaemia, and your doctor thinks that ezetimibe is the right treatment, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS.

Ezetimibe should be available on the NHS within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work in relation to how much they cost compared with other treatments available on the NHS.

Ezetimibe was recommended because the benefits to patients justify its cost.

The condition and the treatment

Hypercholesterolaemia is a medical term meaning that a person's cholesterol levels are too high. In primary heterozygous-familial hypercholesterolaemia, high cholesterol levels are caused by a faulty gene. Whereas in primary non-familial hypercholesterolaemia, which is more common, several genetic factors combine with a person's health risks, such as poor diet, smoking and lack of exercise, to cause high cholesterol levels.

Ezetimibe (Ezetrol) is a medicine that works by blocking the absorption of cholesterol in the gut. This helps to lower cholesterol levels in the blood.

[NHS Choices](#) may be a good place to find out more.

Sources of advice and support

- [Heart UK – The Cholesterol Charity](#), 0345 450 5988
- [British Heart Foundation](#), 0300 330 3311

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Accreditation

