

What is it?

There are several different types of medications that can be used for stroke prevention. Your neurologist will decide which is best based on your risk factors and cause of stroke. These can include:

- Anti-platelet medications: Aspirin® (acetylsalicylic acid) or Plavix® (clopidogrel)
- Anti-coagulant medications: Xarelto® (rivaroxaban) Eliquis® (apixaban), Lixiana® (edoxaban), or Coumadin® (warfarin)
- Cholesterol medications: Lipitor® (atorvastatin), Crestor® (rosuvastatin) or Ezetrol® (ezetimibe)
- Blood Pressure medications: amlodipine besylate, metoprolol, candesartan, ramipril



Stroke Prevention Clinic

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For More Information

Heart & Stroke Foundation. (2023). *Medications*. <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/stroke/treatments/medications>



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[saskhealthauthority.ca](https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca)

Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan



Medications for Stroke Prevention

Stroke Prevention Clinic



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Anti-platelet

Platelets are cells found in your blood stream that help stop bleeding when you get a cut by way of clumping together to form a clot. Anti-platelet medications make your red blood cells slippery, so that they do not clump together, which can help prevent another stroke.

After your stroke, you may have been started on 2 anti-platelet medications called **Aspirin®** and **Plavix®**. Take them both for 21 days and then continue on either Aspirin® or Plavix® indefinitely thereafter.

Side effects to anti-platelet medications include upset stomach, heartburn, and bruising. Please seek medication attention if you notice heavy bleeding or bruising, or blood in your stool, urine or vomit.

Anticoagulants

Anticoagulant medications, sometimes referred to blood thinners, also prevent your blood from clotting.

These medications commonly include: **Xarelto®**, **Eliquis®**, **Lixiana®** or **warfarin**.

Your doctor may have prescribed you one of the above medications if you have been diagnosed with an irregular heart condition called **atrial fibrillation**. This will be a lifelong medication. Depending on what medication was prescribed, you may need routine bloodwork to monitor how thin your blood is.

Continue to monitor for signs of bleeding such as abnormal or excessive bruising, blood in your stool or urine, or bleeding gums.



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Cholesterol

Managing your cholesterol levels plays an important role in stroke prevention. Typically, your doctor will want your LDL (the “loser” or “bad” cholesterol) under 1.8 mmol/L.

A statin medication may be prescribed if your LDL is high or if you have evidence of atherosclerosis or plaque/cholesterol build up in your arteries.

Medications often prescribed include **atorvastatin**, **rosuvastatin**, or **ezetimibe**. Side effects of these medications include muscle aches, muscle cramps, upset stomach and constipation.

Blood Pressure

Hypertension is the number one modifiable risk factor for stroke and heart disease. Blood pressure targets can vary, but are usually less than 140/90 mmHg or less than 130/80 mmHG if you have diabetes or small vessel disease.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.

If at any time you are concerned about your symptoms, or they are unusual for you, please seek medical attention.