



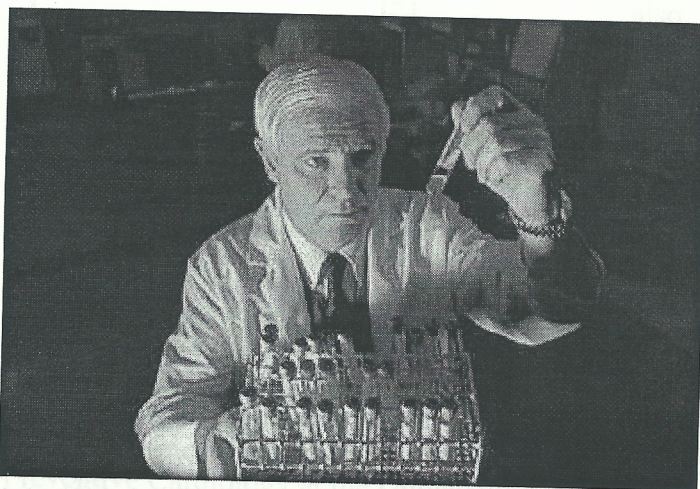
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SMITH BARNEY

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Good Drugs Sometimes Have Their Downsides

Lower Cholesterol, Side Effects Included



A doctor views lab test tubes in a tray while testing for cholesterol
(Seth Resnik/PNI)

"The vast majority (of people) on these medications do fine."

— Michael Miller, director of Preventive Cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center

By Stephen Hart
ABCNEWS.com

Some 15 million American hearts owe their continued health to cholesterol-lowering drugs.

By lowering the level of so-called bad or LDL cholesterol in the blood or the amount of an important blood-borne fat called triglyceride, these drugs can prevent heart disease and save lives.

Of course, the first line of defense against high LDL cholesterol or triglyceride is a change in diet—reduction of total fat intake to 30 percent or less. But diet alone may not help. In that case, drugs come into play.

Like all pharmaceuticals, however cholesterol-lowering drugs have side effects, some of which may argue against their use by certain patients.

Heading Cholesterol Off at the Pass

Today, the drugs of choice for controlling cholesterol belong to a family called statins (Pravacol, or pravastatin,

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added

MAIL

Cholesterol

Less than 200

Desirable

200 to 239

Borderline high

240 or Higher

High

Triglyceride

Less than 200

Desirable