



Lipid-lowering drugs and the PBS

The PBS restriction for lipid lowering drugs changed on 1 October 2006.

In focus

PBS restrictions to the following lipid-lowering drugs

atorvastatin calcium

fluvastatin sodium

pravastatin sodium

simvastatin

fenofibrate

gemfibrozil

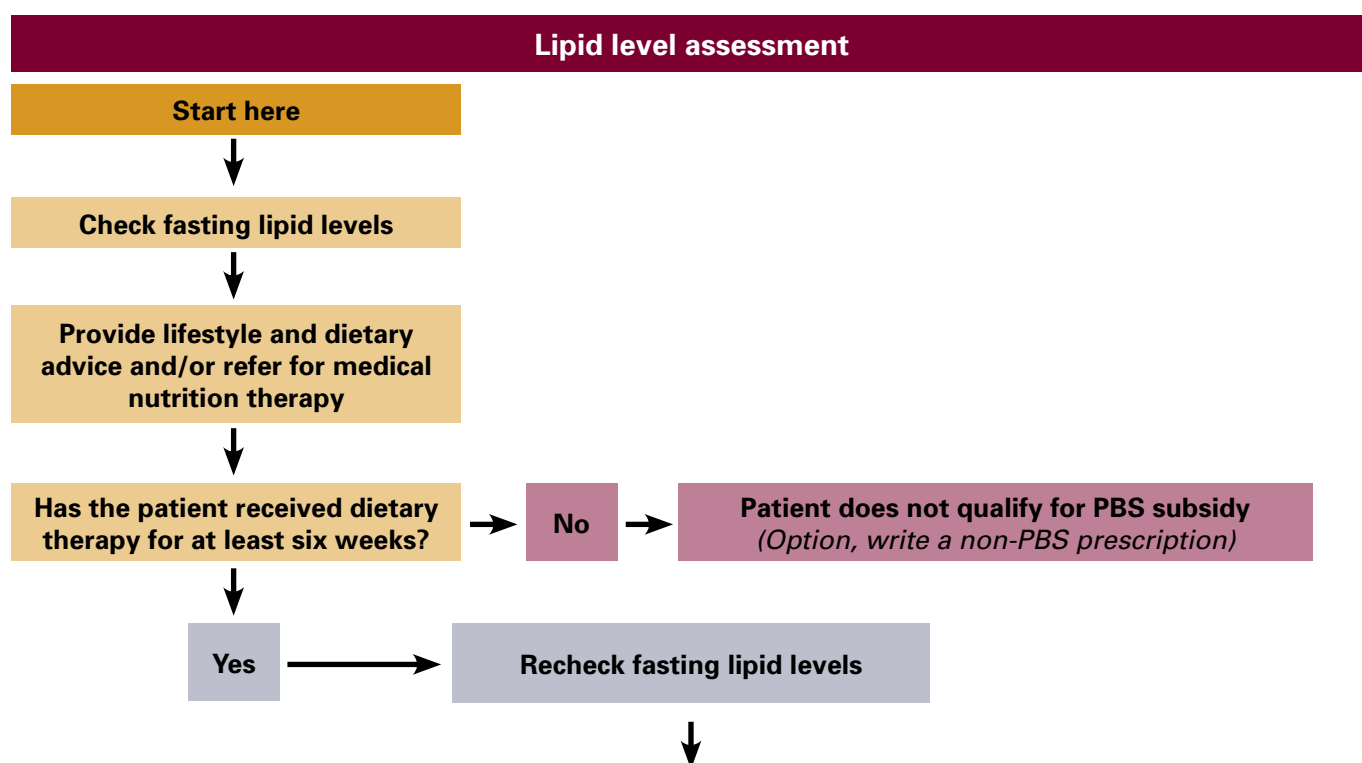


Patients identified as being in one of the following very high-risk categories may commence cholesterol-lowering drug therapy with statins or fibrates at any cholesterol level:

- coronary heart disease which has become symptomatic
- cerebrovascular disease which has become symptomatic
- peripheral vascular disease which has become symptomatic
- diabetes mellitus with microalbuminuria (defined as urinary albumin excretion rate of $> 20\text{mcg/min}$ or urinary albumin to creatinine ratio of > 2.5 for males, > 3.5 for females)
- diabetes mellitus in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander patients
- diabetes mellitus in patients aged 60 or more
- family history of coronary heart disease which has become symptomatic before the age of 55 in two or more first-degree relatives
- family history of coronary heart disease which has become symptomatic before the age of 45 in one or more first-degree relatives.

All patients will be expected to maintain a good diet in addition to drug therapy. Dietary therapy should be reviewed annually.

If your patient is not identified as being in any of the very-high risk categories, please use the following flow-chart and table to determine whether your patient meets the criteria for subsidisation under the PBS.



Lipid levels for prescribing PBS subsidised lipid-lowering medication	
Patients with diabetes mellitus not otherwise included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total cholesterol > 5.5 mmol/L
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander patients Patients with hypertension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total cholesterol > 6.5 mmol/L or • Total cholesterol > 5.5 mmol/L and HDL cholesterol < 1 mmol/L
Patients with HDL cholesterol < 1 mmol/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total cholesterol > 6.5 mmol/L
Patients with familial hypercholesterolaemia identified by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNA mutation or • tendon xanthomas in the patient or their first or second degree relative Patients with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family history of coronary heart disease which has become symptomatic before the age of 60 in one or more first-degree relatives or • family history of coronary heart disease which has become symptomatic before the age of 50 in one or more - second- degree relatives 	If aged 18 or less at treatment initiation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDL cholesterol > 4 mmol/L If aged more than 18 at treatment initiation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDL cholesterol > 5 mmol/L or • Total cholesterol > 6.5 mmol/L or • Total cholesterol > 5.5 mmol/L and HDL cholesterol < 1 mmol/L
Patients not eligible under the above and who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • men aged 35 to 75 • post-menopausal women aged up to 75 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total cholesterol > 7.5 mmol/L or • Triglyceride > 4 mmol/L
Patients not otherwise included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total cholesterol > 9 mmol/L or • Triglyceride > 8 mmol/L

Dietary therapy should be continued concurrently with pharmacological therapy and should be reviewed on an annual basis.

You can still prescribe lipid-lowering drugs to patients who do not meet the PBS restriction criteria by writing a non-PBS prescription.

 www.pbs.gov.au to find out the latest information about lipid lowering drugs