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DAMIAN RASCH, D.O.

ENCINITAS · LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA



CoQ10 and Your Heart

Where this popular supplement has real evidence behind it, where it comes up short, and how to take it if you do.

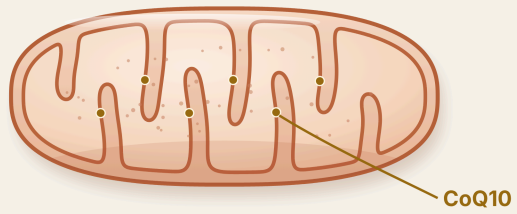
18% → 10%
deaths from any cause over two years in the Q-SYMBIO heart failure trial

100 mg
three times a day, the dose used in that heart failure trial

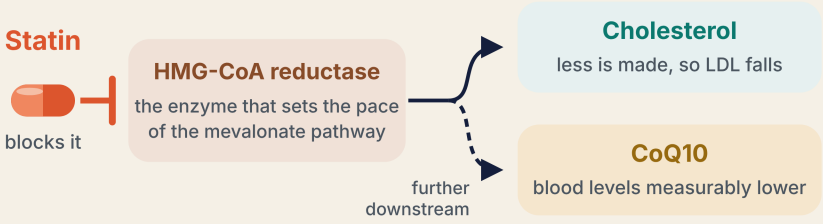
~90%
of statin-blamed symptoms were a nocebo effect in the SAMSON trial

WHAT COQ10 DOES

An energy helper that statins lower



A mitochondrion, the cell's power plant
CoQ10 in the folded inner membrane helps make ATP

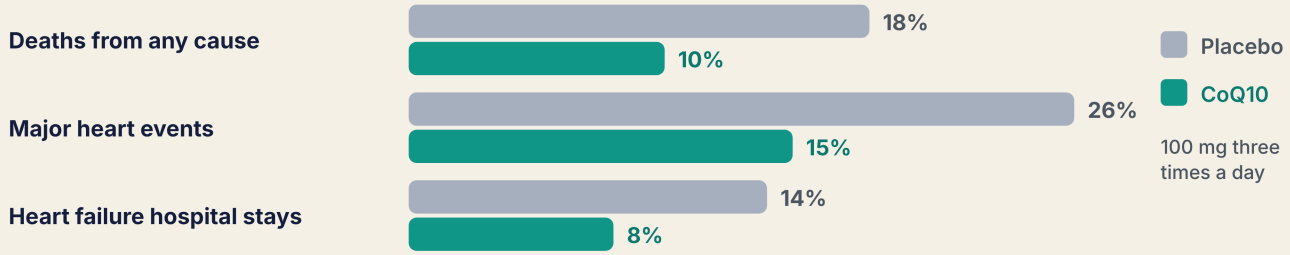


Statins lower CoQ10, yet in trials CoQ10 pills did not ease statin aches.

Coenzyme Q10 is a fat-soluble molecule your body makes on its own. Tissues that work the hardest, like the heart, carry the most. Production declines with age, and heart muscle levels fall in heart failure.

DOES IT HELP IN HEART FAILURE?

Yes, modestly, in one good trial



Q-SYMBIO trial, 420 people with moderate to severe heart failure, over two years

A 2021 Cochrane review found a probable benefit, on moderate-quality evidence. The trial predates two of today's four core medicines.

An add-on, never a swap

In heart failure with reduced pumping function, CoQ10 should never displace or delay the four medicines known to save lives, an ARNI, a beta-blocker, an MRA and an SGLT2 inhibitor.

WHO IT FITS, DOSING AND INTERACTIONS ARE ON THE BACK

SHOULD YOU TAKE COQ10?

Situation by situation

WORTH DISCUSSING

Heart failure with reduced ejection fraction	100 mg three times a day, matching the Q-SYMBIO trial, is a reasonable add-on to your heart failure medicines. A 2023 American Heart Association statement still calls it of uncertain value.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Statin muscle aches	The 2026 ACC/AHA cholesterol guideline rates CoQ10 Class 3, No Benefit, for statin muscle symptoms. Better steps are checking that the aches really track with the statin, lowering the dose, switching statins, or moving to ezetimibe, bempedoic acid or a PCSK9 inhibitor. CoQ10 is cheap and benign, so Dr. Rasch won't refuse it if you ask.
Preventing heart disease in healthy adults	There's no convincing trial evidence that CoQ10 prevents heart attacks. Spend the money on Mediterranean diet groceries instead.

WEAK OR LIMITED EVIDENCE

Blood pressure	It lowers blood pressure only about 3 to 4 mmHg, less than any first-line blood pressure medicine. CoQ10 is not a substitute for proven blood pressure medications.
General heart health	Dr. Rasch is neutral here and doesn't tell patients to start it or to stop it.
Migraine	There's modest evidence at 100 to 300 mg a day, and Dr. Rasch defers to neurology on it.

IF YOU TAKE IT

Dose	100 mg three times a day for heart failure, or 100 to 200 mg a day for general heart use. Take it with a meal that has some fat, and split the doses for steadier blood levels.
Form and brand	The body converts ubiquinone and ubiquinol into each other, and ubiquinol costs 3 to 4 times more. For most people a reputable ubiquinone with USP, NSF International or ConsumerLab verification is fine.
Warfarin	CoQ10 may modestly reduce warfarin's effect. Recheck your INR within 1 to 2 weeks of starting or stopping it.
Several blood pressure pills	CoQ10 may lower blood pressure slightly, so watch for dizziness when you stand.
Side effects	Uncommon and mild, such as nausea, upset stomach or headache. No meaningful interaction with statins, ACE inhibitors, ARBs, beta-blockers, SGLT2 inhibitors or DOACs.

BRING THE BOTTLE

Diet, exercise, a healthy weight, control of blood pressure, LDL and blood sugar, and not smoking all have evidence far stronger than any supplement. The best supplement is one that replaces nothing important. When in doubt, bring the bottle to your next visit.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

damianrasch.com/coq10-heart

For education only, and not a substitute for advice from your own physician. Sources include Q-SYMBIO (JACC Heart Failure 2014), the 2021 Cochrane review, the 2023 AHA scientific statement, SAMSON (JACC 2021), Banach (2015), Kennedy (2020), Dohlmann (2022) and the 2026 ACC/AHA dyslipidemia guideline.

DR. DAMIAN RASCH, D.O. · BOARD-CERTIFIED INVASIVE CARDIOLOGIST · ENCINITAS AND LA JOLLA, CA

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