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Leqvio (Inclisiran)

A cholesterol shot given twice a year. How it works, the schedule, and who it fits.

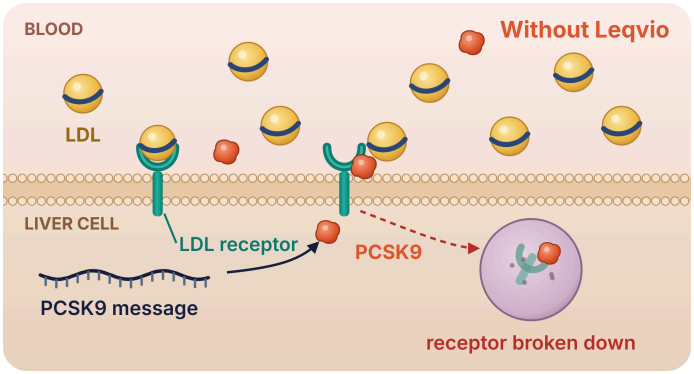
45–50%
more LDL lowering on top of a statin, holding steady between shots

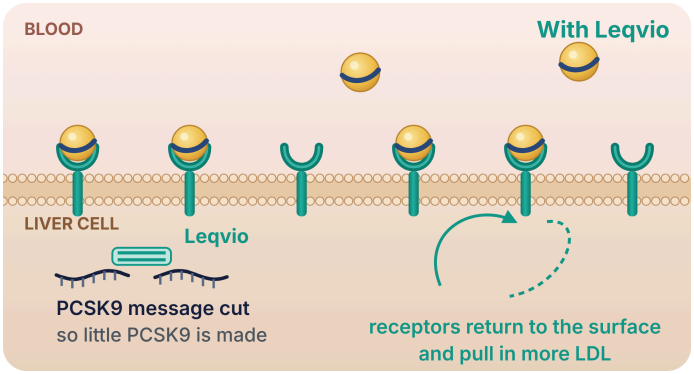
6 months
between shots once the first two, at day 0 and month 3, are done

~5%
get mild redness, swelling or tenderness where the shot goes in

HOW IT WORKS

It silences the liver's PCSK9 message

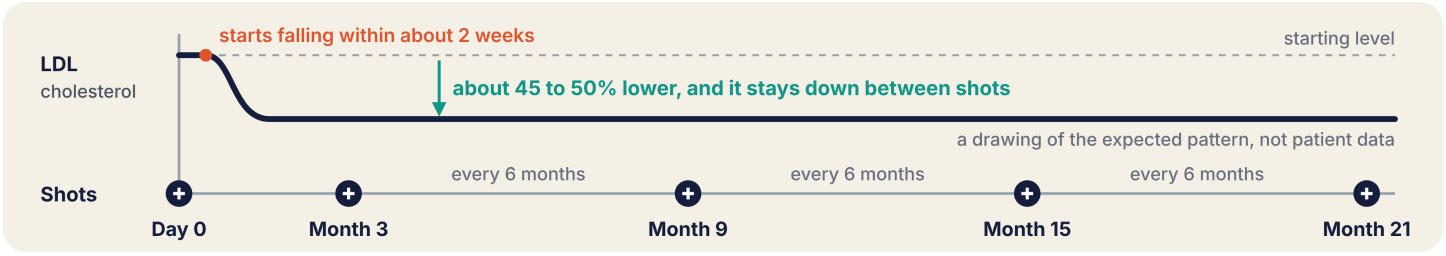




PCSK9 is a liver protein that marks LDL receptors, the docking spots that pull LDL cholesterol out of the blood, for breakdown. Leqvio (inclisiran) is a small interfering RNA (siRNA) drug that destroys the message the liver uses to make PCSK9, so more receptors stay in service and clear more LDL.

THE SCHEDULE

Two starting shots, then one every 6 months



Every shot is the same 284 mg dose under the skin, whatever your weight or kidney function. A healthcare professional gives it, and there's no fasting and no waiting afterward.

One more layer

For most people, Leqvio goes on top of a statin and ezetimibe. Stopping the statin to simplify things almost always undoes most of the benefit.

IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU

Who it fits and what to expect

WHO IT FITS

clearest fit first

Plaque disease in the arteries	You already have artery disease from plaque (ASCVD), take the highest statin dose you tolerate plus ezetimibe, and your LDL is still above 70 mg/dL. At very high risk, which includes most people with heart disease, the cutoff is 55 mg/dL.
Inherited high cholesterol	Heterozygous familial hypercholesterolemia, a high LDL you were born with, that stays above goal on the strongest treatment you can take. Leqvio has a specific FDA approval for it, now from age 12 and for the homozygous form too.
Statins don't agree with you	Several statins and lower doses have failed. Leqvio has no link to the muscle symptoms that make most people stop a statin.
Daily pills are hard	Memory trouble, many medicines, work or travel. Two shots a year in clinic take the daily remembering out of it.

LEQVIO OR A PCSK9 ANTIBODY

both are good choices

How often	Leqvio every 6 months after the first two shots. Evolocumab (Repatha) or alirocumab (Praluent) every 2 to 4 weeks, usually given yourself. The two kinds aren't used together, though either can go with a statin and ezetimibe. A daily PCSK9 pill, Lipfendra, arrived in July 2026.
LDL lowering	About 45 to 50% for Leqvio and 50 to 60% for the antibodies, added to what you already take.
Heart attack and stroke trials	The antibodies have positive outcome trials (FOURIER and ODYSSEY OUTCOMES). Leqvio's outcome trial, ORION-4 with about 15,000 people, is still being reported.
Cost before insurance	About $3,250 a shot (about $6,500 a year) for Leqvio and about $5,800 to $7,300 a year for the antibodies. Most plans cover them after prior authorization, and assistance programs exist.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Side effects	Mild redness, swelling or tenderness where the shot goes in, in about 5%, usually gone within a few days. No muscle symptoms, no liver enzyme problems and no effect on thinking.
Allergic reaction	Rare. Hives, or very rarely something more, would start within minutes, and the team giving the shot is ready to treat it.
Kidneys and other drugs	No dose change for any kidney problem, dialysis included. It combines freely with statins, ezetimibe, bempedoic acid, blood thinners such as apixaban, ARBs, beta-blockers, SGLT2 inhibitors and GLP-1 drugs.
Blood tests	Your clinician will recheck LDL after the first doses. There's no need for liver tests or PCSK9 levels.
Not for	Pregnancy or breastfeeding (safety unproven), severe liver disease (limited data), or an allergy to its ingredients.

USUALLY, YOUR STATIN STAYS

Each medicine adds its own LDL lowering, and at very high risk, which includes most people with heart disease, the aim is an LDL under 55 mg/dL. Statins also calm inflammation and steady plaque, a benefit on top of the LDL they lower.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

damianrasch.com/
leqvio-inclisiran

For education only, and not a substitute for advice from your own physician. Sources include ORION-9, ORION-10 and ORION-11 (NEJM 2020), ORION-3 (2023), FOURIER (NEJM 2017), ODYSSEY OUTCOMES (NEJM 2018) and the 2018 ACC/AHA, 2026 ACC/AHA and 2019 ESC/EAS cholesterol guidelines.

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