



Medi-Cal Rx

Risks of Concomitant Statin Therapy with Gemfibrozil

August 23, 2024

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A clinically significant drug-drug interaction between hydroxymethylglutaryl-CoA (HMG-CoA) reductase inhibitors, also known as “statins,” and gemfibrozil has been described in case reports and identified via the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Adverse Event Reporting System (AERS). When gemfibrozil is combined with statins, there may be increased risk of statin-associated muscle symptoms (SAMS), including rhabdomyolysis, a rare, serious syndrome involving the rapid breakdown of skeletal muscle, with the release of potentially nephrotoxic substances.

The product prescribing information for all statins advises against the concomitant use of statins and gemfibrozil. A warning about this drug-drug interaction is also described in the [2018 Guideline on the Management of Blood Cholesterol](#) and a [scientific statement](#) by the American Heart Association (AHA).

Alternatives for Patients Taking Statins and Gemfibrozil

For patients currently taking both a statin and gemfibrozil for whom combination therapy with a statin and a fibrate is warranted, the following is recommended:

- Fenofibrate is preferred over gemfibrozil due to significantly lower risk for muscle-related toxicity compared with statin-gemfibrozil combination therapy.
- If fenofibrate is not well-tolerated, atorvastatin or rosuvastatin could be considered in combination with gemfibrozil due to a lower magnitude for a potential interaction.
- The combination of lovastatin, pravastatin, or simvastatin with gemfibrozil is not advised.

As shown in **Table 1**, fenofibrate, atorvastatin, and rosuvastatin are all available on the [Medi-Cal Rx Contract Drugs List](#).

Table 1. Selected Anti-Lipidemic Agents Available on the Medi-Cal Rx Contract Drugs List *

HMG-CoA Reductase Inhibitors (Statins)	Fibrates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atorvastatin • Lovastatin • Pravastatin • Rosuvastatin • Simvastatin • Simvastatin/Ezetimibe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fenofibrate • Fenofibrate, Micronized • Fenofibric Acid • Gemfibrozil

* For current information on covered products, check the [Contract Drugs & Covered Products Lists](#) page on the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#).

Providers can also use the [American College of Cardiology’s Statin Intolerance Tool](#) to quickly screen for drug interactions and receive guidance for clinical management of patients taking statin-fibrate combination therapy.