

# Helpful Information Regarding Welchol (Colesevelam)

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**Meta Description:** Suffering from high cholesterol levels and thinking about starting Welchol? Here's some useful information that you should know!

**Keywords:** Cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, cholesterol medication



Welchol, also termed as Colesevelam, is a medication prescribed to lower high levels of **cholesterol** in your body. This drug falls under the bile acid resin (BARs) class of medications, which includes Colestid and Questran as well.

Recent studies have depicted that Welchol can help reduce your **LDL cholesterol** by around 20% and raise your **HDL** by approximately 11%. However, keep in mind that while this **cholesterol medication** doesn't affect your triglycerides, taking it over a long time can actually serve to raise your triglycerides. Therefore, it's best to exercise caution.

This medication is also prescribed to those who have Type 2 diabetes, to help control the blood glucose levels. In addition to this, Welchol is also used to treat heterozygous familial hypercholesterolemia in postmenarchal girls below 10 years of age.

Over here, it's useful to specify that this medication is available in two forms: tablet and resin powdered form, for use.

### How Does Welchol (Colesevelam) Even Work?

If you are suffering from **LDL cholesterol**, your doctor might prescribe you Welchol. Therefore, whether you take it in a resin powder form or as a tablet, will depend upon what your doctor deems as being fit for your body.

So, for instance, if you have been prescribed to take it in a powdered form, the recommended dose is usually a single 3.75 gram of packet daily. Or, it's 1.875 grams of two packs to be taken twice in a day. Therefore, once you're clear about the recommended dose, empty the powder into a cup of water. You can also use fruit juice or diet soda, in case you decide that taking your medication dissolved in water isn't for you. However, make sure that you drink the entire contents of your drink with a meal.

On the other hand, if you're taking tablets, the recommended dose is usually 6 tablets daily. Or, three tablets twice in a day. Keep in mind that the tablets should always be taken with meals, along with a full glass of water or fruit juice.



### Who Should Avoid Taking Welchol (Colesevelam)?

While Welchol can help lower your LDL cholesterol levels by around 20%, it's useful to identify that this medication should be avoided in the following cases:

- If you've had an allergic reaction to Welchol previously.
- If you've had a bowel obstruction.
- If you have triglycerides greater or equal to 500 mg/dL. As Welchol is known to increase the levels of triglycerides in your body further.
- If you have pancreatitis due to high levels of triglycerides.

### What Conditions Should You Monitor While Taking Welchol (Colesevelam)?

If you're taking Welchol and suffer from certain health conditions, your doctor might have to keep a closer eye on you. Therefore, if you have any of the following conditions listed below, your doctor might decide to prescribe you Welchol. However, they'll need to monitor you closely to determine if taking Welchol or not can be potentially dangerous for you.

These health conditions, therefore, include:

- **High Levels of Triglyceride:** If you already have high levels of triglyceride, it doesn't bar you from taking the Welchol medication. However, it means that your doctor will have to monitor your lipid levels regularly as there's a possibility of Welchol increasing your triglyceride levels.
- **Gastrointestinal Tract Mobility Issues:** Welchol is known to cause issues with bowel movements, such as constipation. Therefore, if you suffer from gastrointestinal tract mobility issues, taking Welchol can actually worsen these issues.
- **Difficulty While Swallowing:** If you're suffering from difficulty while swallowing, keep in mind that taking Welchol can actually aggravate this issue. This is because Welchol tablets are known to be large in size, and therefore hard to swallow.
- **Pregnancy:** Although studies have shown Welchol to be a safe cholesterol medication for pregnant women, it can reduce the rate of absorption of vitamins. This means Welchol can decrease the effectiveness of prenatal vitamins. Thus, your doctor will have to determine what the right course of action is.

### What Are Some of The Side Effects of Taking Welchol (Colesevelam)?

One of the most common side effects of taking Welchol is gastrointestinal issues. And are as follows:

- Pain in the abdominal region.
- Heartburn and indigestion.
- Feeling nauseous.
- Constipation.

Besides that, taking Welchol can also cause sore throat and muscle ache. Keep in mind that if these side effects get too bothersome, you should inform your doctor immediately. They will give you some medications to help you treat these side effects. Similarly, they might also decide to adjust your Welchol dose. Or, might switch you to another medication for lowering high levels of cholesterol in your body.

### Which Drugs Can Interact with Welchol (Colesevelam)?

Some drugs have the ability to interact with Welchol by reducing the amount of medication that can be absorbed into your bloodstream. Therefore, it's always a good idea to avoid taking other supplements and medications 4 hours before taking Welchol. However, if you have to take either of these supplements or drugs given below, your doctor might have to adjust your dose. Additionally, they might have to adjust the time when you're required to take Welchol and monitor you regularly for any side effects.

These medications and supplements, therefore include the following:

- Birth control medications.
- Dilantin (phenytoin) and phenobarbital, or other seizure medications.
- Vitamin A, D, E and K, also known as fat-soluble vitamins.
- Warfarin.
- Metoprolol.

Keep in mind that the aforementioned list is by no means exhaustive. Therefore, you should always inform your doctor about any over-the-counter medications that you're taking. This will ensure that your doctor is able to identify any possible interactions that can occur between other medications and Welchol.

### Conclusion

Welchol is known to help reduce your LDL cholesterol. However, it's useful to specify here that it hasn't shown any promising results when it comes to reducing the incidence of cardiovascular disease. In addition to this, Welchol, when taken in powdered form, can be a bit intolerable. Therefore, it's always a good idea to let your doctor know if you are experiencing any issues while taking Welchol.

