

## Key aspects of statin intolerance leading to treatment discontinuation: a patient perspective

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**Background and aims:** Statins are the standard of care for patients with dyslipidemia, but some patients develop intolerance to treatment. The experience of statin intolerant (SI) patients is poorly understood. The objective of this study was to identify key aspects of SI that may be associated with treatment discontinuation.

**Methods:** Using a previously created questionnaire, we conducted a pilot cross-sectional survey to identify items important for describing patient-centric aspects of SI. The study recruited adult (18+) patients with a history of statin-associated side effects from 9 clinics in 6 countries (France, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom), who had received statin treatment within the previous two years.

**Results:** We surveyed 104 patients (mean age 61.5 SD=11.2 years, 63.5% men, 50% currently on statins). Patients most frequently reported muscle-

related symptoms: pain (90.9%), cramps (63.7%), and stiffness (58.2%). Using a 0–10 point scale, significant differences were found between those continuing versus discontinuing their statins for being bothered by side effects (7.5 vs 9.2,  $p=0.001$ ), for an inability to tolerate side effects (6.7 vs 9.0,  $p<0.001$ ), and those having too much side effects interference with their daily life (5.7 vs 8.6,  $p<0.001$ ; see figure). For patients whose doctors worked on adjusting statin regimen, 67% stayed on treatment; for those whose doctors did not, only 10% continued treatment.

**Conclusions:** Results of this pilot survey suggest patients who experience greater side effects severity and interference with daily activity, along with lower efforts by clinicians to work with adjusting their statin regimen, are at greater risk for discontinuing treatment. A wider survey and larger study population is needed to confirm the results of this pilot study.

