

Novartis innovative therapy to lower bad cholesterol can help high-risk patients turn second chances to lifelong victories

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- *High levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C or bad cholesterol) can lead to an accumulation of fatty plaques in the arteries that supply blood to the heart, lungs, and brain. Clogging of these arteries can cause heart attack and stroke.*
- *To raise awareness about the risk of uncontrolled LDL-C and empower Filipinos to prevent cardiovascular events through a heart-healthy lifestyle, Novartis Healthcare Philippines together with the country's leading cardiologists is conducting "Turning Second Chances to Lifelong Victories: The siRNA Roadshow".*
- *Novartis innovative therapy, Inclisiran, has been shown to reduce LDL-C by up to 52% with just two doses per year. This reduction in LDL-C levels further decreases the risk of heart attack and stroke, especially in people having difficulty reaching their LDL-C goal with traditional therapy.^[6,7]*

Jessica, a pseudonym used for the purpose of privacy, was at the peak of her career as an accomplished executive in a prominent corporation based in Makati. However, her world was abruptly shattered when she faced a life-threatening condition.

One morning, as Jessica stood before her colleagues, confidently presenting her latest project, she was unexpectedly struck by intense pain coursing through her head. Simultaneously, a strange weakness began to numb one side of her body. Jessica desperately attempted to call out for assistance, but her words emerged garbled and incoherent, causing further panic and frustration.

Jessica had suffered a stroke caused by a blocked blood vessel in her brain, which could otherwise have been fatal if she hadn't been brought to the hospital immediately. The doctors attributed the stroke to a combination of factors, including Jessica's lack of regular exercise, high-fat diet, and uncontrolled cholesterol level.

Cardiovascular disease top killer in PH

Jessica is among the thousands of Filipinos who suffer heart attack and stroke. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in the Philippines.^[1]

High levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C or bad cholesterol) can lead to an accumulation of fatty plaques in the arteries that supply blood to the heart, lungs, and brain. Clogging of these arteries can cause heart attack and stroke.

While Jessica survived her stroke, the accumulation of plaque in her arteries caused by uncontrolled bad cholesterol greatly increases her risk of a second stroke and other cardiovascular events such as a heart attack. Research shows that people who have experienced a cardiovascular event due to plaque accumulation are 6 to 9 times more likely to suffer another heart attack or stroke.^[2]

Know your LDL-C goals

To raise awareness about the risk of uncontrolled LDL-C and empower Filipinos to prevent cardiovascular events through a heart-healthy lifestyle, Novartis Healthcare Philippines together with the country's leading cardiologists is conducting "Turning Second Chances to Lifelong Victories: The siRNA Roadshow".

Aside from diet and exercise, lowering LDL-C is key to managing and preventing cardiovascular diseases, according to Dr. Lourdes Ella Santos, preventive cardiologist, clinical lipidologist & hypertension specialist. Studies have shown that lowering LDL-C levels could prevent 75% of cardiovascular deaths worldwide.^[3]

"Sustained LDL-C reduction will prevent patients from developing plaques or atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease [ASCVD], which often lead to heart disease and stroke," Dr. Santos said.

Regular check-ups with a cardiologist and an annual lipid profile can help people stay informed about their health status and take proactive measures to prevent ASCVD.

The latest international and local guidelines recommend LDL-C levels below 70 mg/dL for high-risk individuals, and an even more aggressive target of below 55 mg/dL for people with a history of heart attack or stroke. The main treatment goal is to reduce bad cholesterol by at least 50% from the baseline value, even if the starting point is already relatively low.^[4]

"We now know that lowering LDL-C below 50 mg/dL is safe and well tolerated. A decrease of 39 mg/dL translates to a 22% reduction in the risk of heart attack. The lower the LDL-C, the better," said Dr. Raul Lapitan, cardiologist and echocardiographer.

To minimize a patient's risk of heart attack and stroke, cardiologists recommend the following LDL-C goals^[4]:

- Low-Risk Patients = less than 116mg/dL
- Moderate-Risk Patients = less than 100 mg/dL
- High-Risk Patients = less than 70 mg/dL
- Very High-Risk Patients = less than 55 mg/dL

New therapy helps high-risk patients regain control^[5]

A new class of cholesterol-lowering treatment called small interfering RNA (siRNA) can help high-risk individuals like Jessica reduce their LDL-C.

Inclisiran is the first and only LDL-C-lowering siRNA therapy that selectively targets the liver. By preventing production of the target protein, Inclisiran increases hepatic uptake of circulating LDL-C, thereby reducing LDL-C levels in the bloodstream. Inclisiran has been shown to reduce LDL-C by up to 52% with just two doses per year. This reduction in LDL-C levels further decreases the risk of heart attack and stroke, especially in people having difficulty reaching their LDL-C goal with traditional therapy. Inclisiran works best with statin therapy and is an exciting addition to proven effective therapies for LDL-C control.^[6,7]

In January 2024, Jessica, who had been struggling to achieve the goal of less than 55 mg/dL on traditional therapy, received her first dose of Inclisiran. Her LDL-C decreased to less than 20 mg/dL, significantly reducing her risk for future cardiovascular events.

Turning second chances to lifelong victories

Recent advancements in medical treatments have made it possible for individuals like Jessica to turn second chances to lifelong victories. By working closely with your cardiologist and taking a proactive approach to managing bad cholesterol, you can regain control over your health and live a healthier, fuller life.

“The difference between an expense and an investment is an expense is taking money out of your pocket to maintain the status quo, e.g., rent. An investment is taking money out of your pocket to have a better future, e.g., buying your own home. We hope patients view controlling their LDL-C is an investment on their life; to live longer, live well, and celebrate many more birthdays with their loved ones.” said Joel Chong, Country President of Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

Experts strongly recommend that people with a history of heart attack or stroke consult their doctor about the optimal LDL-C goal and ideal treatment option to optimize their health and achieve better cholesterol control.

Your accumulated years of exposure to LDL-c can be used as an estimate to your plaque burden and your average risk for the first heart attack. Know your risk. Visit <https://unblockedmovement.ph>.



Top cardiologists convened at “Turning Second Chances to Lifelong Victories: The siRNA Roadshow” to raise awareness about the risk of uncontrolled cholesterol.



Lipidologist and hypertension specialist Dr. Louella Santos shares clinical studies and outcomes of Inclisiran therapy for high-risk patients with cardiovascular disease.



Cardiologist and echocardiographer Dr. Raul Lapitan highlights the safety and effectiveness of aggressively lowering LDL-C targets to prevent heart attack.

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6. Kosmas CE, Muñoz Estrella A, Sourlas A, Silverio D, Hilario E, Montan PD, et al. Inclisiran: A New Promising Agent in the Management of Hypercholesterolemia. Diseases. 2018;6(3):63. doi: 10.3390/diseases6030063
7. Ray KK, et al. N Engl J Med. 2020;382(16);1507-1519

About Novartis in Cardiovascular

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) affects hundreds of millions of people and claims more lives globally than cancer, chronic lung disease and diabetes combined. It is time to change that. Around 80% of premature cardiovascular deaths can be prevented by addressing factors that cause or worsen CVD. We have a responsibility to make that a reality for more people.

Novartis has been advancing the scientific understanding and treatment of CVD for more than four decades. Through early intervention, pioneering science and technological innovation, we are addressing factors that increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes, improving the function of damaged hearts and easing the burden of care for patients. We also collaborate with healthcare professionals, patient communities and diverse organizations to improve preventive CV care worldwide. Together, we will help more people with CVD get the right treatments at the right time and live longer and healthier lives.

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