

# Novartis innovative therapy can help high-risk patients control bad cholesterol

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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.*

Grace, a pseudonym used to protect her identity, is eagerly awaiting the birth of her granddaughter. However, the retiree in her early 60s and successful entrepreneur from Alabang is battling hypertension, diabetes, and high LDL-C ("bad cholesterol"). These comorbidities threaten to rob her of the chance to witness her granddaughter grow up and achieve milestones in life.

High LDL-C levels resulted in the accumulation of fatty plaque deposits in the arteries of Grace's heart. Because of her severely blocked coronary arteries, Grace suffered two heart attacks, the first in 2017 followed by another in 2018. Despite multiple open-heart surgeries and statin therapy to control cholesterol, Grace lives in constant fear that her health could take a turn for the worse at any moment.

Research has shown that the risk of a second or third heart attack and stroke is 6 to 9 times higher for people who have a history of cardiovascular events.<sup>[1]</sup> Each year, heart disease and stroke claim the lives of 124,182 and 69,396 Filipinos, respectively, making cardiovascular disease (CVD) the leading cause of death in the Philippines.<sup>[2]</sup>

Many patients struggle to adhere to standard statin therapy due to side effects, such as chest pain and muscle cramps. Suboptimal adherence further increases the risk of cardiovascular events. Three in four Filipinos with heart disease do not reach their LDL-C goals, with little to no use of non-statin therapies. Such patients are at very high risk for another potentially fatal heart attack and stroke.<sup>[3]</sup>

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."

## Preventing another event<sup>[4,5]</sup>

There is good news. Recent research has shown that maintaining LDL-C levels under 70mg/dL can prevent plaque formation from progressing and can even lead to regression in plaque size.

“Sustained lowering of LDL-C is essential to reducing CVD risk brought about by plaque formation. It can slow the progression of plaque formation, decrease the size of arterial blockage, and reduce the risk of heart attack,” said Dr. Lourdes Ella Santos, preventive cardiologist, clinical lipidologist & hypertension specialist.

A 39 mg/dL reduction in LDL-C translates to a 22% reduction in the risk of another cardiovascular event.

To minimize a patient’s risk of heart attack and stroke, cardiologists recommend the following LDL-C goals:<sup>[6]</sup>

- 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<sup>[6]</sup>**

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

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 blood stream. 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.

Three months after getting the Inclisiran injection and starting aggressive statin therapy, Grace reduced her LDL-C from around 60 mg/dL to below 40 mg/dL levels.

“Inclisiran stays in the body for just 48 hours and has a lasting effect of up to 6 months. This means that the risk for long-term adverse reactions is extremely low, even in patients with diabetes and other comorbidities,” said Dr. Adriel Guerrero, a cardiologist.

## **Turning second chances to lifelong victories<sup>[7]</sup>**

Recent advancements in medical treatments have made it possible for individuals like Grace 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.

“We need to help patients see that controlling their LDL-C is not an expense but an investment in their health so they can continue living longer and living well,” 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>.



Cardiologist Dr. Adriel Guerrero shares professional medical insights on Inclisiran for lowering LDL-C. Dr. Guerrero discusses the therapy's mechanism of action and dosage regimen, highlighting its potential to aid high-risk patients in managing their cholesterol levels more effectively.



Dr. Lourdes Ella Santos, a preventive cardiologist, clinical lipidologist, and hypertension specialist, emphasizes the importance of sustained LDL-C level lowering in reducing cardiovascular disease risk and saving lives during the "Turning Second Chances to Lifelong Victories: The siRNA Roadshow."

## References

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## **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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