

# Bile Acid Binding Resin

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## What is a Bile Acid Binding Resin?

Bile is one of the richest sources of cholesterol in the body. It is used to help us digest dietary fat. After helping digestion, most of the bile is reabsorbed and sent back to the liver. Bile acid binding resins bind to the bile, and the complex is then eliminated from the body in the feces. As some cholesterol is excreted from the body, after being transformed into bile acids, the use of these resins results in lower blood cholesterol levels.

## Who should take a Bile Acid Binding Resin?

Individuals who benefit from taking this medication include those who have one or more of the following:

- Elevated cholesterol (total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol)
- Unable to tolerate other cholesterol medications because of liver or muscle side effects
- Cholestasis (decreased bile flow)

## What should I know about taking this medication?

The effect of these resins is directly related to the amount taken. This means higher doses of this medication will work more effectively in lowering your cholesterol.

We recommend that you start at a low dose of resin and gradually increase your dose to a level specified by your physician (“target dose”). Typically, the target dose for this medication is 2 – 4 scoops, three to four times per day. When starting the resin, always increase the dose slowly. Start at a low dose (i.e. 1/2 scoop or 1-2 tablets with each meal) and gradually increase the dose over several days until you reach your target dose. If you have side effects with this medication, stay at the highest well tolerated dose, even if it is less than what is prescribed by your physician.

**The bile acid resin may interfere with how your body absorbs other medications. Consult your physician if you are taking other medications. Typically, other medications should be taken at least one hour before your dose of the resin or at least four hours after you take the resin.**

## How should I take this medication?

Bile acid resins are available either as (big) tablets (Colestid™) or as a powder. The powder should be mixed with a non-carbonated beverage or with your favourite dense, fluid food such as apple sauce, yoghurt or pudding. The resin powder comes in pre-measured packets or in multi-dose cans that contain a scoop for measuring the dose. Consider the total amount of sugar and calories when selecting what you are going to mix the resin with, in order to avoid unnecessary calories and fat. Some other tips for taking your resin medication:

- Some patients mix their dose of resin just prior to taking it, others prefer to mix their entire daily dose at one time
- Some patients state that allowing the pre-mixed resin solution to stand overnight in the refrigerator improves its taste. If you do this, make sure that you mix the resin solution well before pouring your dose.
- Resins mix and taste well in orange juice or Tang™
- Lumps of resin powder can easily be broken by stirring with a whisk or fork, or using a blender or hand mixer at a low speed

## What are common side effects with this medication?

The most common side effects related to the use of resins include stomach irritation, constipation or diarrhoea. These symptoms will likely disappear after you have been on the medication for a week or so. If problems with constipation develop and last more than one week, add stewed prunes, prune juice, bran, and more water to your diet. An increase in physical activity (such as walking) may also help this problem.

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**START RESIN DOSE AT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **scoop(s) per day**

**TARGET DOSE OF RESIN** \_\_\_\_\_ **scoop(s)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **times per day.**