

# Zocor Problems: Serious Side Effects, Rhabdo & Lawsuits

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**DISCLAIMER:** This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor. Please use this information to help in your conversation with your doctor. This is general background information and should not be followed as medical advice. Please consult your doctor regarding all medical questions and for all medical treatment.



## ABOUT ZOCOR

Zocor is a prescription statin drug used by people who need to lower their cholesterol. Zocor works by inhibiting cholesterol production in the liver.

**Zocor is the brand name for the drug manufactured by Merck & Co. of Whitehouse Station, New Jersey. Its chemical name is simvastatin.**

The problem with Zocor is patients prescribed the 80 mg. pill have an increased risk of developing [rhabdomyolysis](#), a life-threatening form of muscle disease which can lead to severe kidney damage, [kidney failure](#), and death.

## Cholesterol-lowering Drug Statistics

An estimated 24 million Americans take cholesterol-lowering drugs. It's big business and good for investor relations. An estimated 12 million women are prescribed statin drugs each year.

In a clinical trial database where 41,050 patients were treated with Zocor with 24,747 (approximately 60%) treated for at least 4 years, the incidence of myopathy was approximately 0.02%, 0.08% and 0.53% at 20, 40 and 80 mg./day, respectively. Myopathy is a muscular disorder that interferes with the proper function of muscle fibers. Depending on the severity, a person suffering myopathy may find the muscles are so weak that performing routine tasks is extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The FDA reviewed results of the SEARCH trial which over a period of 6.7 years, evaluated the number of major cardiovascular events in 6,031 patients taking 80 mg. of simvastatin compared to 6,033 patients taking 20 mg. of simvastatin. Preliminary results show more patients in the 80 mg. group developed myopathy compared to patients in the 20 mg. group.

## FDA's preliminary analysis

FDA's preliminary analysis suggests that 11 (0.02%) patients in the 80 mg. group developed rhabdomyolysis compared to none of the patients in the 20 mg. group.





## RHABDOMYOLYSIS, KIDNEY DISEASE, AND 80 MG. ZOCOR LAWSUITS

Rhabdomyolysis (often abbreviated as rhabdo) is the most serious form of muscle weakness and can lead to severe [kidney damage](#), [kidney failure](#), and death.

Muscle damage can be caused by a crushing injury, chemical or biological injuries.

### 80 mg Zocor would be considered a chemical injury.

The destruction of the muscle leads to the release of the breakdown of products of damaged muscle cells into the bloodstream. Damaged muscle cells like myoglobin, a protein, can damage the kidneys which filters blood out of the body. Kidney damage from rhabdo can be so severe that patients may develop kidney failure.

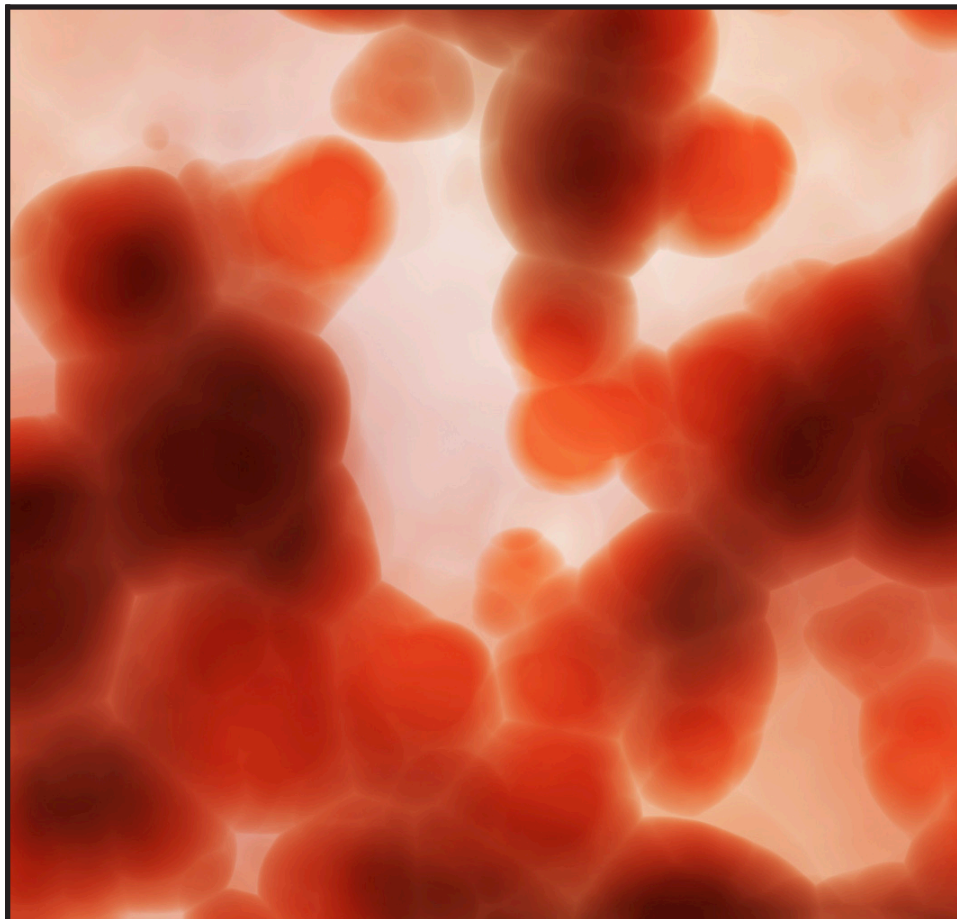
Known risk factors for developing rhabdomyolysis are being 65 or older, low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism), and taking 80 mg. of [Zocor or a simvastatin](#).

The most reliable test in the diagnosis of rhabdomyolysis is the level of creatinine kinase (CK) in the blood. This enzyme is released by damaged muscle, and levels above five times the upper limit of normal (ULN) indicate rhabdomyolysis. Depending on the extent of the rhabdomyolysis, levels up to 100,000 units are not unusual.

## According to Zocor prescribing info:

As with other statins—the risk of myopathy/rhabdomyolysis is dose related.

All patients starting therapy with simvastatin, or whose dose of simvastatin is being increased, should be advised of the risk of myopathy and told to report promptly any unexplained muscle pain, tenderness or weakness. Simvastatin therapy should be discontinued immediately if myopathy is diagnosed or suspected.





## KIDNEY FAILURE FROM 80 MG ZOCOR STATIN DRUG, ZOCOR INJURY LAWSUIT

The kidneys play key roles in body function, not only by filtering the blood and getting rid of waste products, but by balancing levels of electrolytes in the body, controlling blood pressure, and stimulating the production of red blood cells.

The kidneys monitor the amount of body fluid, the concentrations of electrolytes like sodium and potassium, and balance of the body. The kidneys filter waste products in the blood like blood urea nitrogen or BUN and creatinine or Cr.

If a person is dehydrated, the kidneys will hold onto as much water as possible and the urine becomes concentrated. When adequate water is present in the body, the urine is much more diluted and becomes clear.

With rhabdomyolysis, there is significant muscle breakdown in the body, and the degeneration products of muscle fibers clog the filtering system of the kidneys. Often occurring because of trauma and crush injuries, it can also be caused by some medications used to treat high cholesterol.

If kidney disease gets worse, wastes can build to high levels in your blood and make you feel sick. You may develop complications like high blood pressure, anemia, weak bones, poor nutritional health, and nerve damage. Also, kidney disease increases your risk of having heart and blood vessel disease. These problems may happen slowly over a long period of time. Early detection and treatment can often keep chronic kidney disease from getting worse. When kidney disease increases, it may eventually lead to kidney failure, requiring dialysis or kidney transplantation to maintain life.



## 80MG ZOCOR STATINS CAUSE RHBDO AND KIDNEY FAILURE

Statins are drugs that can lower cholesterol. Statins work by blocking a substance your body needs to produce cholesterol. A frequently prescribed statin drug is Zocor (or generic simvastatin).

**Zocor and related statin drugs are not without dangers especially when taking the 80 mg Zocor statin dose. In the case of statins, more is not better.**

Zocor has also been linked to potential increase in [rhabdomyolysis](#), kidney damage, and [kidney failure](#) in patients taking 80 mg. compared to 10 mg., 20 mg., and 40mg. doses.

Muscle symptoms are a common side effect of statins including aching shoulders, jaw pain, or muscle pain in the legs. Muscle pain is a symptom of muscle breakdown occurring in the body from the 80mg Zocor statin drug. When tissues break down, the body must eliminate the excess waste products that overload the kidneys, causing more serious problems. Rhabdomyolysis is the medical term for the breakdown of muscle fibers that results in the release of muscle fiber contents into the bloodstream. Besides muscle pain, the other major symptom of rhabdomyolysis is dark, red, or cola-colored urine.



## FAQ: Zocor Lawsuits

### Do I qualify for a Zocor lawsuit?

Perhaps ... if you or a loved one are currently taking or formerly used 80 mg Zocor or simvastatin or Vytorin 10/80 mg and have been diagnosed with rhabdomyolysis or serious myopathy, it is recommended that you act now and consult with a Zocor [unsafe drug attorney](#). If you are unsure, we recommend you still inquire.

### Is simvastatin or Zocor safe to use with other drugs?

There is plenty of drug interaction to be avoided. If you are taking Zocor, do not take Itraconazole, Ketoconazole, Erythromycin, Clarithromycin, Telithromycin, HIV protease inhibitors, and Nefazodone. There are other medications to avoid also. Please ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### On March 12, 2010, Zocor label was revised based on interim results from an ongoing clinical trial—the Heart Protection Study 2. What does the revised Zocor label say?

1) patients of Chinese descent should not receive simvastatin 80 mg with cholesterol-modifying doses of niacin-containing products; 2) caution is to be used when such patients are treated with 40 mg. or less in combination with cholesterol-modifying doses of niacin-containing products; and 3) healthcare professionals are to avoid prescribing simvastatin doses greater than 40 mg. daily when patients are taking the medication diltiazem, due to an increased risk for myopathy.

### What is Simcor?

SIMCOR tablets contain niacin extended-release (NIASPAN) and simvastatin in combination. Simvastatin, an inhibitor of HMG-CoA reductase, and niacin are both lipid-altering agents.

### Can I afford a Zocor statin lawsuit?

Yes. If you agree to retain [Anapol Schwartz law firm](#) and Anapol Schwartz law firm agrees to be retained, you both sign an agreement stating so. Anapol Schwartz represents unsafe drug lawsuits on a contingency fee basis. This means if you do not win your case, Anapol Schwartz does not get paid. Anapol Schwartz has offices in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and West Virginia.



## VYTORIN DANGER, GEMFIBROZIL, MYOPATHY AND RHABDOMYOLYSIS

Simvastatin, which is also part of Merck's cholesterol drug Vytorin and Abbott Laboratories' drug Simcor, is sold by 11 other generic drug makers, including Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, and Novartis's Sandoz division.

The dosage range for Vytorin is 10/10 mg./day through 10/80 mg./day. The recommended usual starting dose is 10/20 mg./day. Vytorin should be taken as a single daily dose in the evening, with or without food.

Patients who require a larger reduction in LDL-C may begin at 10/40 mg./day. After initiation of Vytorin, lipid levels may be analyzed after two or more weeks and dosage adjusted, if needed.

### Vytorin concerns

The safety and effectiveness of Vytorin administered with fibrates have not been established so the combination of Vytorin and fibrates should be avoided per the Vytorin packaging.

There is an increased risk of myopathy when simvastatin is used concomitantly with fibrates (especially gemfibrozil). Combination therapy with gemfibrozil should be avoided because of an increase in simvastatin exposure with concomitant use.

The results of an earlier, small study published last year suggested that Vytorin might boost the chances of developing cancer. In that earlier study, called SEAS, researchers found that among patients taking Vytorin, 101 patients developed cancer compared with 65 in the control group. Among these patients, 39 taking Vytorin died, compared with 23 in the control group.

But, a three-study analysis in the Sept. 2, 2008, issue of the New England Journal of Medicine did not find compelling evidence of such a connection.

People taking Vytorin 10/80 with 10 mg. of Zetia and 80 mg. of simvastatin should be aware of the FDA alert regarding the dangers of extreme [muscle weakness](#) or rhabdomyolysis.





## RESOURCES

[www.anapolschwartz.com](http://www.anapolschwartz.com)

[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

## FOR A FREE CONSULTATION:

Please [contact us](#) for a free no-obligation consultation. The more information that you can provide, the more helpful it will be. You are under no obligation to continue. Any information you provide will be held in the strictest of confidence.

If you have questions, please call us toll-free at 1.866.735.2792. Thank you.

