ezetimibe (e-zet-i-mibe)
- Zetia, Ezetrol, Zetia

**Classification**
- Therapeutic: lipid-lowering agents
- Pharmacologic: cholesterol absorption inhibitors

**Pregnancy Category C**

**Indications**
- Inhibits absorption of cholesterol in the small intestine

**Pharmacokinetics**
- Following absorption, rapidly converted to ezetimibe-glucaronide, which is active. Bioavailability is variable.

**Half-life:** 22 hr.

**TIME/ACTION PROFILE**
- **ROUTE** ONSET PEAK DURATION
- PO: unknown unknown unknown

**Contraindications/Precautions**
- Hypersensitivity; Acute liver disease or unexplained laboratory evidence of liver disease (when used with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors);
- Moderate or severe hepatic impairment;
- Concurrent use of fibrates; OB: May cause fetal harm by interfering with cholesterol synthesis and, possibly, biologically active substances derived from cholesterol; Lactation: May cause liver transaminases when administered with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors. Elevation is usually asymptomatic and returns to baseline with continued therapy.

**Adverse Reactions/Side Effects**
- GI: cholecystitis, cholelithiasis, elevated liver enzymes with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors, nausea, pancreatitis.
- Derm: rash.
- Misc: ANGIOEDEMA.

**Drug Interactions**
- **Drug-Drug:** Effects may be enhanced by cholestyramine or other bile acid sequestrants. Concurrent use of ezetimibe may ↓ levels and the risk of cholelithiasis. Cyclosporine may ↑ levels. May ↑ risk of cholesteroluria when used with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors.

**Route/Dosage**
- **PO (Adults):** 10 mg once daily.

**Renal Impairment**
- **PO (Adults):** CCr 60 mL/min and concurrent use with simvastatin—Do not exceed simvastatin dose of 20 mg/day.

**NURSING IMPLICATIONS**

**Assessment**
- Obtain a diet history, especially with regard to fat consumption.
- Lab Test Considerations: Evaluate serum cholesterol and triglyceride levels before initiating, after 2–4 wk of therapy, and periodically thereafter.
- May cause ↑ liver transaminases when administered with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors. Monitor liver enzymes prior to initiation and during therapy according to recommendations of HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors. Elevation is usually asymptomatic and returns to baseline with continued therapy.

**Potential Nursing Diagnoses**
- Noncompliance, related to diet and medication regimen (Patient/Family Teaching)

**Implementation**
- Do not confuse Zetia with Zebeta (bisoprolol) or Zestril (lisinopril).
- PO: Administer without regard to meals. May be taken at the same time as HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors.

**Patient/Family Teaching**
- Instruct patient to take medication as directed, at the same time each day, even if feeling well. Take missed doses as soon as remembered, but do not take more than 1 dose/day.
Medication helps control but does not cure elevated serum cholesterol levels.

- Advise patient that this medication should be used in conjunction with diet restrictions (fat, cholesterol, carbohydrates, alcohol), exercise, and cessation of smoking. Ezetimibe does not assist with weight loss.
- Instruct patient to notify health care professional if unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness occur. Risk may increase when used with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors.
- Instruct patient to notify health care professional if fatigue, muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness occur. Risk of myopathy may be higher when used with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors.
- Instruct patient to notify health care professional of all Rx or OTC medications, vitamins, or herbal products being taken and to consult health care professional before taking any other Rx, OTC, or herbal products.
- Advise patient to notify health care professional of medication regimen prior to treatment or surgery.
- Instruct female patients to notify health care professional promptly if pregnancy is planned or suspected or if breast feeding. Ezetimibe is contraindicated in pregnancy.
- Emphasize the importance of follow-up exams to determine effectiveness and to monitor for side effects.

**Evaluation/Desired Outcomes**

- Decrease in serum LDL and total cholesterol levels.

**Why was this drug prescribed for your patient?**