



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Coenzyme Q10

This information describes the common uses of Coenzyme Q10, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

What is it?

CoQ10 is a chemical made by the cells in your body. It is used for growth and maintenance. You can take CoQ10 as a dietary supplement. Supplements come as pills or liquid.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

CoQ10 is used to:

- Prevent heart disease
- Reduce cholesterol
- Reduce muscle pain caused by cholesterol medications known as statins
- Prevent migraines
- Help reduce symptoms of Parkinson's disease
- Treat infertility

CoQ10 also has other uses that haven't been studied by doctors to see if they work.

CoQ10 is generally safe. But supplements can interact with some medications and affect how they work. For more information, read the “What else do I need to know?” section below.

What are the side effects?

CoQ10 can cause mild side effects such as:

- Sleeplessness
- Nausea (feeling like you’re going to throw up)
- Diarrhea (loose or watery stool)
- Loss of appetite

What else do I need to know?

- Talk to your doctor if you’re on chemotherapy or radiation therapy. CoQ10 may affect how these treatments work and can make them less effective.
- Talk to your doctor if you’re taking blood thinners such as warfarin (Coumadin®). CoQ10 may increase your risk of bleeding if you take it with blood thinners.
- Talk to your doctor if you’re on theophylline (Theolair®) for asthma or other lung problems, such as emphysema (when air sacs in your lungs are damaged) or chronic bronchitis. CoQ10 may affect how this medication works.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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