Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation

The Brett Torino Foundation Education Services, a program of Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation, has developed a number of education services designed to meet the educational needs of every child diagnosed with a life-threatening or chronic illness in Southern Nevada. The program provides a way for chronically-ill children to continue their education while receiving treatment and return to school with equal opportunity and any necessary accommodations required by law to aid them in the pursuit of their success in education and future goals.

Introduced in 2021, NVCCF's LEARNING POD is a service of The Brett Torino Education Services Program of Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation. In partnership with CCSD, this IN-PERSON learning program is facilitated by Nicki Klein-Richter, MA, M.Ed., full-time and multilingual NVCCF Education Supervisor, who is a licensed teacher with CCSD along with 26 years of classroom experience. The "pod" was created to support children who are in current treatment, experiencing effects from treatment, immune compromised, and unable to return to in-person or hybrid learning due to their diagnosis. The LEARNING POD operates MON – THUR, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Participants must be registered clients of NVCCF and must confirm their participation with NVCCF's instructor. Please contact "Mrs. K" at 702.735.8434 or at nicki@

A Program of Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation

The Caring Place, **an adult services program** of NVCCF, is dedicated to easing the journey of those adults diagnosed with cancer as well as their caregivers. An oasis away from medical facilities, The Caring Place Program provides no-cost programs and services to support, educate and empower those who have or have had cancer as well as their direct caregivers.

Services are intended to assist in healing mind, body, and soul and are not a replacement for medical care. We are committed to improving your quality of life and helping **you experience joy and peace.**

nvccf.org for more information on this and other support services.

Named after its donor, the programs and services include the Brett Torino In-Patient Classroom, located at Sunrise Children's Hospital, tutoring, advocacy, transition services and more. Through these programs, licensed professional staff members work to ensure that each child is given the opportunity and support to succeed in their education.

How the Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation Helps:

- Provide direct and bedside instruction in The Brett Torino Foundation In-Patient Classroom for students in-patient at Sunrise Children's Hospital
- Provide tutoring for school age critically ill children, their siblings, and for children whose parents are diagnosed with cancer
- Offer tutoring at several locations throughout the Las Vegas valley for students in need of supplementary instruction
- Attend school meetings to provide teachers and administrative staff with the facts on diagnosis and treatment and ensure accommodations and interventions are implemented and followed
- Support students as they re-enter the school setting: performing a puppet show designed to educate peers and teachers on the facts of diagnosis and treatment, the importance of embracing differences, and messages of anti-bullying

Beyond statins: New ways to lower LDL cholesterol

By Julie Corliss, Ex. Ed. Harvard

For more than four decades, statins have been the mainstay treatment for lowering high LDL cholesterol levels when diet and exercise aren't enough. LDL is a key contributor to cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke, so reducing high LDL levels can literally be lifesaving.

But some people taking the maximum dose of a statin still have higher-than-recommended LDL levels. Others cannot tolerate statin side effects such as muscle pain.

Fortunately, a number of other LDL-lowering drugs have emerged over the past 20 years. One promising new possibility is enlicitide, a pill version of the powerful LDL-reducing injectable drugs known as **PCSK9** inhibitors (see "The gene discovery behind the PCSK9 drugs").

Another is **obicetrapib**, a pill that lowers LDL through a completely different mechanism than any currently available medications. Both are expected to be submitted for FDA approval over the next year or two.

"These therapies represent an important breakthrough for people who are believed to be statin intolerant or who still have high LDL cholesterol on their current treatment," says Dr. Michelle O'Donoghue, associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and the McGillycuddy-Logue Endowed Chair in Cardiology at Brigham and Women's Hospital. Here's an overview of statin alternatives currently on the market and in the pipeline.

Everyone has a gene that provides instructions for making a protein called PCSK9, which helps regulate LDL levels in the bloodstream. Some people have a variant in this gene that causes high PCSK9 levels and extremely high LDL levels - as high as 300 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL). People with these variants are prone to heart attacks at a young age. Other people have different variants that have the opposite effect. They make very little PCSK9 and have LDL levels as low as 15 mg/dL. Their risk of heart attack is far below average. The 2005 discovery of these gene variants led to the creation of PCSK9 inhibitors, which essentially mimic the effects of the protective gene variant. Scientists are now testing a gene-editing technique to permanently reduce the production of PCSK9.

Non-statin pills that lower LDL: Current options

The first non-statin pill to treat high cholesterol, ezetimibe (Zetia), was approved in 2002. It works by decreasing the amount of cholesterol your body absorbs from the food you eat, and it can lower LDL by about 20%.

Two decades later, the FDA approved bempedoic acid (Nexletol), which can also lower LDL by about 20% to 25%. Like statins, this drug works by reducing the liver's cholesterol production, but it has fewer muscle-related side effects because it works only in the liver. Ezetimibe is also available in combination with bempedoic acid (Nexlizet) or with simvastatin (Vytorin). These combination pills can cut LDL cholesterol by 40% to 60%.

Injectable drugs to lower LDL

First approved in 2015, the drugs known as PCSK9 inhibitors work by helping the liver remove cholesterol from the blood. They include alirocumab (Praluent) and evolocumab (Repatha), which are given by self-injection once or twice a month. Inclisiran (Leqvio), which was approved in 2021, is a twice-yearly injection administered at a doctor's office or clinic.

While these drugs are highly effective, slashing LDL cholesterol by 50% to 60%, they

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