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The patients used in the series are paid actors, and any recommendations or information are not to be construed as a directive, endorsement, or medical advice. Always check with your provider before starting or changing your medications, diet, or exercise regimen.

00:46

Dr. Salazar: Hi. Good morning, Rob. I'm Dr. Salazar. I'm a cardiologist here to discuss your particular situation with you.

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Rob (patient): Good morning.

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Dr. Salazar: How are you doing today?

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Rob (patient): I'm well. Doing really, really, well.

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Dr. Salazar: And what brings you in to see a cardiologist today?

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Rob (patient): Well, you know, just kind of some checkups, and things like that. I'm just kind of wondering, "What is the typical patient health care journey look like for a patient like me, who's been diagnosed with ASCVD?"

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Dr. Salazar: OK, well first of all, what exactly happened to you that you were diagnosed with this condition, and do you know what it stands for?

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Wthaseiitiaesitpac tetis e a frptere01:35Dr. Salazar:

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Rob (patient): I would like some more...

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Dr. Salazar: I see.

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Dr. Salazar: So, ASCVD is really an umbrella term that we use to refer to atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease. And it can mean a heart attack, non-fatal heart attack, coronary artery disease, or stroke. So, in your case, you probably had coronary artery disease as diagnosed by your previous physician. So, the main thing that we have to do moving forward is address your risk factors. What led you to this diagnosis? And the main contributing factor for this diagnosis is high cholesterol.

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Dr. Salazar: Do you know about your cholesterol?

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Rob (patient): Yeah, my cholesterol is definitely high.

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Dr. Salazar: And since your diagnosis, what have you done to address that, or what has any other health provider, or your primary care physician done to address that?

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Rob (patient): So, we've talked about changing my diet. We've talked about exercise. We've talked about, you know, really kind of a lifestyle change. Those are starting to move the needle. We feel they are a little bit. So, I feel fine. You know, I'm feeling fine. So, why do I need to follow up with another doctor?

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Dr. Salazar: Well, you mentioned some very important recommendations. And since you actually have the diagnosis of ASCVD, it is important to follow up with a cardiologist because you do have the diagnosis. And what a cardiologist can help you with is trying to curb or trying to decrease the chances of you experiencing another event or any other events associated with your diagnosis. The main thing that we have to do, is we have to talk about secondary prevention with use of statins, for example, which you have not mentioned yet.

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Ron (patient): Mm hmm.

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Rob (patient): What should I expect to happen in my specialist doctor's visit?

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Dr. Salazar: Well, they should be able to discuss with you, or... first of all, explain to you more about your specific diagnosis or the specific condition that led to your diagnosis. And then they should be able to show you the tools we have as cardiologists to show you what your risk is of experiencing a heart attack, or another heart attack, with your current condition and risk factors based on lab work, on your

important, and you should be able to understand exactly why you're taking the medications that you have been prescribed, especially why you meet criteria and why you should start taking what we call statins, which are cholesterol lowering medications.

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Rob (patient): And there are some statins that are in play...

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Dr. Salazar: Atorvastatin?

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Rob (patient): Yes, sir.

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Dr. Salazar: Atorvastatin. Perfect. Yes. Atorvastatin is one of the most popular statins prescribed, especially after someone has experienced an event.

04:31

Rob (patient): What about my primary care doctor? I mean, can all of these doctors coordinate and share my progress and findings, or will that be my responsibility?

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Dr. Salazar: I think the answer is "yes" on both accounts. So, doctors and primary care physicians are great at reaching out to the specialists that they have referred their patients to, to obtain information and to communicate. And specialists are also really good at trying to get back to the primary care physicians with information. Having said that, it's really important for you as a patient to become your own advocate. It's very important for you to have access to your own labs, so for example in this visit, you would be able to share them with me faster.

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Dr. Salazar: It would be also important for you to know what comes next, and what are the next steps and what things you should be looking out for.

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Rob (patient): Mm-hmm. So, can I bring my family with me for these other visits to help me, you know, remember my instructions?

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Dr. Salazar:

