

## Patient information

### Dabigatran

#### How does it work?

Dabigatran is a type of medicine known as an anticoagulant - or blood thinner.

It makes your blood flow through your veins more easily. This means your blood will be less likely to make a blood clot.

#### Why has my doctor given me dabigatran and what are the benefits?

##### I am taking dabigatran for:

- ☐ A blood clot in the lungs (known as pulmonary embolism or PE)
- ☐ A blood clot in a vein, often in the leg (known as deep vein thrombosis or DVT)
- ☐ An irregular heartbeat (known as atrial fibrillation or AF)
- ☐ Other: .....

Dabigatran is used to prevent growth of a clot that has developed.

It's also used to lower the risk of blood clots if you're at high risk of having them in the future. People who are at high risk include those who have atrial fibrillation, a condition which is associated with clots in the brain (stroke).

Dabigatran is one of the anticoagulant treatment options available for preventing clots. It is part of the direct oral anticoagulant group of medicines, also known as DOACs.

#### How should I take my dabigatran?

Always follow the instructions on the label, which will usually mean you have to take your dabigatran twice a day. If you do not take dabigatran regularly, it will not be effective and your risk of a clot forming or getting worse will increase.

The dose is usually twice daily morning and night.

Dabigatran can be taken with or without food. The capsule should be swallowed whole with some water. Do not break, chew, or empty pellets from the capsule since this may increase the risk of bleeding.

The capsules should be kept in their original packaging, so can't be re-dispensed into compliance aids, like dosette boxes.

If you have had a new DVT or PE, this will usually mean you have to have heparin injections for the first five days before starting on dabigatran.

**I am taking dabigatran:**

☐

Long-term or lifelong

☐

Short term only – this is usually three to six months. Please discuss how long your treatment will last with your doctor.

**My dose is:** .....

**What if I can't swallow my dabigatran?**

Dabigatran capsules cannot be crushed. Speak to your doctor about alternatives if you struggle to swallow your dabigatran.

**Do not stop taking this medicine unless your doctor tells you to.**

You should inform your doctor or dentist you are taking dabigatran before any surgery or treatment is scheduled. It may need to be stopped for one or more days before any planned surgery, dental or medical procedure but do not stop taking until asked to, as you may need to an alternative anticoagulant treatment instead.

**What should I do if I miss a dose?**

**It is important not to skip doses or the medicine won't work.**

A missed dose of dabigatran may still be taken up to six hours before the next scheduled dose. If the next dose is less than six hours away the missed dose should not be taken. Never take double the dose to make up for missed doses.

If you have taken too many capsules all at once, you may have an increased risk of bleeding. Contact your doctor or local hospital emergency department (A&E) at once. Show the doctor your pack of capsules or anticoagulant alert card.

**What are the risks of dabigatran?**

There are risks and benefits of taking all medicines, however, your doctor will discuss why there are more benefits than risks for you taking dabigatran.

**What are the side effects of dabigatran?**

All medicines have side effects, but not everybody will experience these. As this medicine affects blood clotting, most side effects are related to signs such as bruising or bleeding.

**Tell your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following side effects:**

- Long or excessive bleeding – any bleeding you **Cannot** stop **Requires** medical assistance. If you experience a nose bleed that lasts than more than ten minutes, or a cut that lasts more than 30 minutes, please go to a walk-in centre
- Blood in the urine or vomit
- Passing black, tarry or blood stained stools

- Exceptional weakness, tiredness or paleness
- Dizziness or headaches
- Unexplained swelling.

**If you fall and injure yourself** while taking dabigatran, you should seek urgent medical attention, especially if you hit your head or are involved in a road traffic accident, due to the increased risk of bleeding.

If you knock yourself whilst taking dabigatran you might find that you bruise more easily, this is normal, however large unexplained bruising is a sign of abnormal bleeding and requires medical assistance.

### **Can I take dabigatran if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding?**

You **should not** take dabigatran if you are pregnant. If you are pregnant or if you are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine. If you get pregnant whilst taking dabigatran, please contact your doctor straightaway.

If there is a chance you could get pregnant, use a reliable form of contraceptive whilst taking dabigatran.

It is not recommended to take dabigatran whilst breastfeeding. If you are breastfeeding or plan on breastfeeding, please speak to your doctor straightaway.

### **How should dabigatran be stored?**

Keep all medicines well out of the reach of children – it is best to lock them in a cupboard or medicine cabinet. They should not be put into daily dose containers e.g. blister packs.

Do not take your capsules if the expiry date has passed. Keep the capsules in their original packaging and store them in a dry place below 25°C.

### **Do I have to carry a card?**

Yes, you will be given an alert card that you should carry with you at all times. This has important information to be given to medical professionals in an emergency.

### **Can I take other medicines/ alcohol while taking dabigatran?**

Dabigatran has fewer potential interactions with other medicines compared with warfarin, and at present there are no known interactions with specific foods or alcohol.

There are some medicines which dabigatran does interact with so you should inform your prescribing doctor of the names of all medicines you are taking (including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements).

Dabigatran should not be taken with anti-inflammatories like ibuprofen, naproxen or aspirin. Sometimes your doctor will wish you to take dabigatran with another medicine that may thin your blood such as low dose aspirin or clopidogrel. If you are taking one of these medicines please check with your doctor or anticoagulation service that it is to continue with the dabigatran.

It is important you check with your doctor or pharmacist before you take any other medicines, including ones you buy, especially cold or flu remedies.

### **Are there any alternative treatments available?**

If you have been prescribed dabigatran it is the most appropriate treatment for you, however there are other treatment options. If you have any side effects or wish to discuss alternative treatments please speak to your doctor.

### **How does it differ to warfarin?**

Warfarin is another type of anticoagulant that patients may be prescribed as an alternative if deemed appropriate, for example if you have a metallic heart valve. Warfarin requires regular blood test monitoring and may require regular dose changes. If you want to find out more about warfarin, please contact the anticoagulation clinic (contact details below).

### **What will happen if I decide not to have treatment?**

If you decide not to take dabigatran or any other anticoagulant you will not get any of the benefits. You must discuss this with your doctor as they need to know if you are not taking it and may be able to prescribe an alternative.

### **Who can I tell about my side effects?**

You should discuss any side effects with a healthcare professional.

In addition, please report any side effects to the MHRA via the yellow card scheme. Reports are confidential and help to improve the safety of medicines.

Report side effects on the website (visit <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/> or search for yellow card scheme and on the yellow card app on the apple app store or google play store.

**If you have any questions about dabigatran please contact your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.**

### **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## Further information

**This leaflet is not a substitute for any advice your doctor, nurse or pharmacist may give you.**

**You can get more detailed information from the manufacturer's information leaflet.**

**If you want further information regarding the content of this leaflet please contact Haematology Liverpool (contact details below).**

**Medicines information patient Hotline**

**0151 529 3208**

**Haematology Liverpool**

**Royal Liverpool Hospital: Open 9am-5pm**

**0151 706 3397**

**Author: Anticoagulation Safety Group**

**Review date: August 2027**

All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

يمكن توفير جميع المعلومات المتعلقة بالمرضى الموافق عليهم من قبل انتمان المستشفى عند الطلب بصيغ أخرى، بما في ذلك لغات أخرى وبطرق تسهل قراءتها وبالحروف الطباعية الكبيرة وبالصوت وبطريقة برايل للمكفوفين وبطريقة مون والكترونياً.

所有經信托基金批准的患者資訊均可以其它格式提供，包括其它語言、易讀閱讀軟件、大字

體、音頻、盲文、穆恩體 ( Moon ) 盲文和電子格式，敬請索取。

در صورت تمایل می‌توانید کلیه اطلاعات تصویب شده توسط اتحادیه در رابطه با بیماران را به اشکال مختلف در دسترس داشته باشید، از جمله به زبانهای دیگر، به زبان ساده، چاپ درشت، صوت، خط مخصوص کوران، مون و بصورت روی خطی موجود است.

زانیاری پیوندیدار به نه‌خوشانه‌ی له‌لایمن تراسته‌وه په‌سه‌ند کراون، نه‌گه‌ر داوا بکرت له فورماته‌کانی تردا بریتی له زمانه‌کانی تر، نیزی رید (هاسان خویندنه‌وه)، چاپی گه‌وره، شریتی ده‌نگ، هیلی موون و نه‌لنکترونیکی همیه.

所有经信托基金批准的患者信息均可以其它格式提供，包括其它语言、易读阅读软件、大字体、音频、盲文、穆恩体 ( Moon ) 盲文和电子格式，敬请索取。

Dhammaan warbixinta bukaanleyda ee Ururka ee la oggol yahay waxaa marka la codsado lagu heli karaa nuskhado kale, sida luqado kale, akhris fudud, far waaweyn, dhegeysi, farta braille ee dadka indhaha la', Moon iyo nidaam eletaroonig ah.