



# BLOOD THINNERS

## MEDICATIONS THAT PREVENT CLOTS



BLOOD THINNERS ARE MEDICINES THAT PREVENT BLOOD CLOTS FROM FORMING. BLOOD CLOTS CAN CAUSE HEART ATTACKS, STROKES, AND OTHER BLOCKAGES. THEY DO NOT BREAK UP CLOTS THAT ALREADY EXIST IN YOUR BODY, BUT THEY CAN PREVENT THOSE CLOTS FROM GETTING BIGGER.

### TYPES OF BLOOD THINNERS

#### ANTICOAGULANTS:

- HEPARIN
- WARFARIN (COUMADIN)
- APIXABAN (ELIQUIS)
- RIVAROXABAN (XARELTO)
- DIABIGATRAN (PRADAXA)

#### ANTIPLATELETS:

- ASPIRIN
- CLOPIDOGREL (PLAVIX)
- TICAGRELOR (BRILINTA)
- PRASURGREL (EFFIENT)

### WHAT DO THEY DO?

#### ANTICOAGULANTS:

- SLOW DOWN YOUR BODY'S PROCESS OF MAKING CLOTS

#### ANTIPLATELETS:

- PREVENT BLOOD CELLS CALLED PLATELETS FROM CLUMPING TOGETHER TO FORM A CLOT. THESE ARE MAINLY FOR PATIENTS WHO HAVE HAD A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE.

### WHO NEEDS TO TAKE THEM?

#### PATIENTS WHO HAVE:

- CERTAIN HEART OR BLOOD VESSEL DISEASES
- AN ABNORMAL HEART BEAT CALLED "ATRIAL FIBRILLATION" AKA A FIB
- HEART VALVE REPLACEMENT
- RISK OF BLOOD CLOTS AFTER SURGERY
- CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS

### CAN I EVER STOP THEM?

YOU SHOULD NOT STOP TAKING YOUR BLOOD THINNERS UNLESS SPECIFICALLY TOLD TO BY YOUR HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER. STOPPING YOUR BLOOD THINNER CAN INCREASE YOUR RISK OF CLOTS. IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE GETTING YOUR MEDICATION FROM THE PHARMACY DUE TO COST OR AVAILABILITY, CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

- BLEEDING
- UPSET STOMACH, NAUSEA, AND DIARRHEA
- OTHER SIDE EFFECTS MAY DEPEND ON THE SPECIFIC MEDICATION.

CALL YOUR PRACTITIONER IF YOU HAVE ANY SIGN OF SERIOUS BLEEDING SUCH AS:

- HEAVIER THAN NORMAL MENSTRUAL BLEEDING
- RED OR BROWN URINE, OR RED OR BLACK POOP
- BLEEDING FROM YOUR NOSE OR GUMS THAT DOES NOT STOP QUICKLY

### PRACTICING SAFETY:

BLOOD THINNERS REQUIRE EXTRA SAFETY PRACTICES BY BOTH PATIENTS AND PRACTITIONERS. THEY MAY INTERACT WITH CERTAIN FOODS, MEDICINES, VITAMINS, AND ALCOHOL. BE SURE TO LET YOUR PRACTITIONER KNOW WHAT SUPPLEMENTS YOU TAKE. YOU MAY NEED REGULAR BLOOD TESTING TO CHECK IF YOUR BLOOD IS TOO THIN, OR MORE PRONE TO CLOTS WHILE TAKING THESE MEDICATIONS.

SOURCE: [HTTPS://MEDLINEPLUS.GOV/BLOODTHINNERS.HTML](https://medlineplus.gov/bloodthinners.html)

[HTTPS://WWW.STOPTHECLOT.ORG/ABOUT-CLOTS/MANAGING-ANTICOAGULANTS/](https://www.stoptheclot.org/about-clots/managing-anticoagulants/)

DISCLAIMER: MED ED MATERIALS, 2023. THIS INFORMATION IS INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT, NOT CONTRADICT, THE MEDICAL ADVICE OF YOUR PRACTITIONER. FOR QUESTIONS OR MORE INFO, CONTACT YOUR PRACTITIONER.

[MEDEDMATERIALS.ORG](https://mededmaterials.org)

