

DABIGATRAN

Other names: Pradaxa®



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

How does dabigatran work?

Dabigatran prevents the formation of blood clots. This type of medication is called an anticoagulant. Dabigatran inhibits a specific protein in the blood, called thrombin. Thrombin contributes to the formation of blood clots.

Excessive clotting can sometimes occur when physical mobility is low, such as following major orthopaedic surgery of the lower limb. Excessive clotting may also be due to a heart condition called atrial fibrillation (in which the heart beats irregularly). If excessive clotting is not prevented, it can lead to serious health problems such as strokes or blood clots in the lungs (pulmonary embolism).

Why you are taking this medicine?

Dabigatran is used to prevent clots in patients with:

- Atrial fibrillation (irregular heart beat)
- Knee replacement surgery
- Hip replacement surgery
- Recurrent deep-vein thrombosis(DVT) or pulmonary embolism

Dabigatran is used to treat clots in patients with:

- Deep-vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism (blood clots in your legs or lungs)

Consult your doctor before taking this medicine:

- If your kidneys don not work well
- If you have problems with the way your liver works
- If you have ever had a stomach ulcer or bleeding in the brain
- If you have had recent spine or eye surgery
- If you have liver problems or liver disease

Tell your doctor if you are planning to have surgery (including dental work)

When to take this medicine?

Swallow the capsules whole with a full glass of water and food. Do not chew or open the capsules.

Take dabigatran at the same time each day (usually twice a day) to achieve the best effect. Carefully follow the instructions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist about what dose to take and for how long.

What to do if you miss a dose?

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor or speak to your pharmacist **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- chest pain or being short of breath
- swelling of hands, ankles and feet
- bleeding
- red or dark brown urine
- red or black bowel motions

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- bruising
- nose bleeds
- tiredness, headaches, being short of breath when exercising, dizziness, looking pale
- diarrhoea
- indigestion, heartburn
- painful, swollen joints
- throat discomfort when swallowing

The list of side effects is not complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

Other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including medicines that you can buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket, or health food shop, including:

- Aspirin and anti-inflammatory medicines (NSAIDs) e.g. diclofenac, ibuprofen (increase risk of bleeding)
- Amiodarone, ketoconazole (can increase dabigatran blood level in the body)
- Rifampicin, St. John's Wort, carbamazepine (can decrease dabigatran blood level)

Storage

Dabigatran must be kept in its original container; do not re-package tablets into daily or weekly pill boxes.

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.