

## Emerging Anticoagulants for VTE Prevention and Treatment: Is Change Upon Us?

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Anticoagulants are recommended for the prevention and treatment of venous thromboembolism (VTE) and the prevention of thromboembolic events in patients with chronic conditions such as atrial fibrillation (AF). Currently available anticoagulants are comprised of unfractionated heparin, low molecular weight heparins, vitamin K antagonists, and the synthetic pentasaccharide fondaparinux. Although effective, these agents have significant limitations.

Specific targets in the clotting cascade have garnered increased focus on the development of new antithrombotic agents, more specifically antithrombin and anti-Xa. Currently several oral and parenteral anti-IIa and anti-Xa drugs are in clinical development for the management of cardiovascular disease and thrombosis prevention and treatment.

Concentrating on drugs that have at least reached phase III clinical trials, this presentation will review each antithrombotics mechanism of action and pharmacology, highlight the potential advantages of these novel agents over existing anticoagulants, describe the results of the clinical trials evaluating these new agents for VTE prevention and treatment, and provide perspective on the opportunities for these drugs and their potential drawbacks.

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