

Oral Anticoagulant (Blood Thinner) Options for Atrial Fibrillation or Deep Vein Thrombosis/Pulmonary Embolism

The reason I am taking a blood thinner medication is:

To prevent stroke caused by atrial fibrillation

If you have an irregular heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation (also known as AF or a-fib), you may be at risk for having a stroke. When your heart doesn't beat correctly, a blood clot can form in the heart and then travel to the brain. A blood clot in the brain is called a stroke. If you have a-fib, your health care provider may decide you need a medication to prevent a stroke. There are several medication options for stroke prevention.

What are my medication options for stroke prevention if I have Atrial Fibrillation?

Your health care provider will check to see if you have *other* medical conditions in addition to a-fib that could put you at higher risk for stroke. This will help decide what the best stroke prevention medication is for you.

- You may be at higher risk of stroke if you
 - are over age 65
 - have diabetes
 - have high blood pressure
 - have heart failure
 - have already had a stroke
 - have vascular disease
 - are female
- If you *do* have any of these conditions, you may need a prescription medication, and below is a summary of your medication options and some important differences for you to understand.

To treat a blood clot in the leg (deep vein thrombosis, or DVT) and/or a blood clot in the lung (pulmonary embolism, or PE)

If you have a blood clot in your leg (deep vein thrombosis, or DVT) and/or a blood clot in your lung (pulmonary embolism, or PE), your health care provider may give you a medication to help treat the blood clot(s), and to help prevent more clots from forming.

		Warfarin (Coumadin®)	Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)	Rivaroxaban (Xarelto®)	Apixaban (Eliquis®)	Edoxaban (Savaysa®)
Effectiveness	For preventing stroke	Better than aspirin	Better than warfarin	As good as warfarin	Better than warfarin	Better than warfarin
	For DVT/PE		As good as warfarin	As good as warfarin	As good as warfarin	As good as warfarin
	For CAD or PAD			When combined with aspirin, better than aspirin alone		
Major side effects		Bleeding	Bleeding (similar to warfarin) Stomach upset	Bleeding (similar to warfarin, more than aspirin)	Bleeding (less than warfarin)	Bleeding (less than warfarin)
Dose of medication		The dose is different for each person and depends on results of blood clotting time monitoring	150 mg twice daily	For stroke prevention: 15 mg or 20 mg once daily	For stroke prevention: 2.5 mg or 5 mg twice daily	For stroke prevention: 30 mg or 60 mg once daily
				For DVT/PE treatment: 15 mg <u>twice daily</u> for the first 21 days after the blood clot is found, then 20 mg once daily with dinner. May consider 10 mg once daily after 6 months.	For DVT/PE treatment: 10 mg twice daily for the first 7 days after the blood clot is found, then 5 mg twice daily. May consider 2.5 mg twice daily after 6 months.	For DVT/PE treatment: 30 mg or 60 mg once daily
				For CAD/PAD: 2.5 mg twice daily combined with aspirin 81 mg daily		

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Blood testing to decide the medication dose	Yes: INR blood tests needed twice weekly at first and then once monthly	None routinely required			
Other blood testing	No	Yes—your health care provider should order a blood test to check your kidney function before you start the medication and then at least once per year			
Dietary instructions	Yes, need to eat consistent amounts of foods containing Vitamin K	Take with or without food Avoid grapefruit & grapefruit juice	Take with food Avoid grapefruit & grapefruit juice	Take with or without food Avoid grapefruit & grapefruit juice	Take with or without food Avoid grapefruit & grapefruit juice
Interactions with other medications	Yes; you should notify your Thrombosis Service provider when you begin new medications or stop medications so that he or she can check for interactions				
What to do BEFORE surgery or procedure	**Always let your health care provider know that you are taking a blood thinner medication BEFORE you have any type of surgery or procedure. He/she can work with you and the provider performing the procedure on a plan for how to best handle your blood thinner medication before and after the procedure.				
Antidote (what a doctor can give you to reverse medication effects in case the blood thinner medicine causes a bleeding problem)	Vitamin K and/or blood product	Praxbind® (idarucizumab)	Andexxa® (Coagulation Factor Xa Recombinant, Inactivated –zhzo)		Antidotes are currently being studied in clinical trials (For now, some blood products may help indirectly)
Estimated Cost (actual cost will be different for everyone depending on prescription insurance)	About \$4 per month for the medication plus cost of blood testing	The cost of dabigatran, rivaroxaban, apixaban, or edoxaban is different for everyone and may depend on your prescription insurance plan. There are discounts or coupon cards available. Check with your pharmacist or insurance provider to find out the cost of these medications for you.			