

Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)

Patient Information Leaflet

If your DOAC is managed by your GP – PLEASE CONTACT YOUR GP FOR ALL QUERIES.

ONLY NCC patients

For Urgent Care please contact your nearest emergency department without delay.

Non-Urgent Clinical Queries

Monday-Friday 08:00-17:00

Please call the nurse on (01) 428 4403 and leave your name, hospital number or date of birth, contact details and your query and a nurse will return your call)

For Non-Clinical Queries appointments, documentation requests

Monday- Friday 08:30-17:00 Please call (01) 416 2637 Email: ncc@stjames.ie

To change an appointment please email
anticoagappointments@stjames.ie



Scan the QR code to access the
**DOAC Patient Information
Video**

Access at: www.bit.ly/doacncc

The information provided in this leaflet is not exhaustive, please refer to the patient information provided with dabigatran for full detailed information and/or discuss with your doctor/pharmacist.

WHAT ABOUT TAKING OTHER MEDICINES?

Your medicines will be reviewed before you start dabigatran and any necessary changes will be made, as other medicines may interact with dabigatran. It is important you check with your pharmacist or doctor before starting any additional medicines or herbal remedies or before stopping any existing ones.

- Avoid aspirin and aspirin-containing medicines unless prescribed by your doctor
- Avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen (Nurofen®) which is available over the counter
- Paracetamol and codeine-based pain killers are acceptable.
- It is advisable to purchase all medicines from one pharmacy and inform them you are taking dabigatran

WHAT ABOUT PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING?

Dabigatran is not recommended during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

- If you are planning to become pregnant please inform your doctor who may switch you to an alternative medication.
- Women of childbearing age should use a reliable contraceptive while taking the anticoagulant.
- If you are on dabigatran and your period is 1 week overdue and you think you may be pregnant, do a pregnancy test. If the pregnancy test is positive, you should contact your doctor urgently. If the test is negative, re-test every 3 days until either the period arrives or the test is positive.
- Breastfeeding is not recommended while taking dabigatran. Alternative anticoagulants can be used when you are breastfeeding.

CAN I DO CONTACT SPORTS?

If you are involved in contact sport, discuss this with your doctor or DOAC Clinic.

CAN I DRINK ALCOHOL?

It is recommended that you do not exceed the recommended upper limit of 2 standard drinks per day.

1 standard drink

= 1 glass or half pint of beer, lager or stout

= 1 small glass of wine (100 mL)

= 1 single measure of spirits, e.g. whiskey or vodka or gin.

WHAT ABOUT TRAVEL?

Ensure you have enough dabigatran with you for your trip and carry it in your hand luggage.

DO NOT STOP TAKING THIS MEDICATION WITHOUT FIRST TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR

Carry your anticoagulant Alert Card with you and wear an Alert Bracelet. Show your Alert card to your doctor, pharmacist, dentist or nurse at each visit.

Visit www.hpra.ie and search 'dabigatran' to get further information on this drug.

Postal address:

**National Coagulation Centre,
St James's Hospital,
James Street,
Dublin 8
D08 A978**

Email Address

ncc@stjames.ie

WHAT IS DABIGATRAN (PRADAXA)?

Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) is one of a group of anticoagulants called Direct Oral AntiCoagulants (DOACs). Dabigatran works by interfering with a substance called thrombin which is involved in the development of blood clots.

Dabigatran has been licenced in adults for:

- Prevention of blood clots in patients who have knee or hip replacement surgery.
- Treatment and prevention of blood clots in your legs, i.e. Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) or in your lungs, i.e. Pulmonary Embolus (PE)
- Prevention of stroke in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat).

If you are being switched from warfarin to dabigatran then warfarin must be discontinued: both agents should not be taken at the same time.

CAN ANYONE TAKE DABIGATRAN?

No, not everyone can take dabigatran. You should discuss the benefits and risks of taking this drug with your health care professional. In particular, dabigatran is not suitable for patients with chronic kidney disease.

DOES DABIGATRAN NEED TO BE MONITORED?

Dabigatran levels do not require routine monitoring. However, we recommend that your kidney and liver function is checked prior to starting treatment and at least once a year. If you develop abnormal kidney function your dose may need to be reduced. Discuss with prescriber, GP or DOAC clinic.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF DABIGATRAN?

Like all medicines, dabigatran can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. Like other similar medicines (medicines to reduce blood clotting), dabigatran may cause bleeding which can potentially be life-threatening. In some cases the bleeding may not be obvious.

Please attend the Emergency Department immediately if you suffer major trauma or a blow to the head or are unable to stop bleeding and inform the healthcare professional that you are taking dabigatran.

Consult your doctor immediately if you have:

- Bloody, black or tarry bowel motions
- Blood in the urine
- Coughing up or vomiting blood or material that looks like coffee grounds
- Nose bleeds (that last longer than 10 minutes)

Please inform your doctor if you have:

- Heavy menstrual bleeding
- Nosebleeds (that last less than 10 minutes)
- Bleeding from your gums
- Unusual or extensive bruising
- Exceptional weakness
- Tiredness
- Paleness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Unexplained swelling

WHAT DOSE OF DABIGATRAN SHOULD I TAKE?

Your doctor will decide the dose you need but most people need to take two capsules a day. Make sure you know how many capsules you should be taking and how long you need to take it for. If you are unsure, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

HOW AND WHEN SHOULD I TAKE DABIGATRAN?

Try and take your dabigatran at about the same time every day. Swallow the dabigatran capsules **whole** with some water, or take them with or after food to avoid indigestion. Never bite, chew or open the capsules.

The dabigatran blister case can help you keep track of how many capsules you have taken and still need to take. Make sure that you have enough capsules in stock so that there is no chance of running out of capsules. You need to keep taking dabigatran every day for as long as your doctor tells you.

NEVER GET YOUR DABIGATRAN PUT IN PHARMACY BLISTER PACKS WITH YOUR OTHER MEDICATIONS.

Please inform the healthcare professional treating you that you are taking dabigatran: this includes anyone who prescribes medication for you or anyone who plans to carry out a procedure or surgery on you, for example, your dentist or surgeon, and inform them well in advance of the date of procedure.

WHAT IF I FORGET TO TAKE A DOSE?

If a dose is missed, take the dose immediately if it's still more than 6 hours until your next scheduled dose. If it's less than 6 hours until your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take the next scheduled dose of dabigatran and carry on as usual. Never take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

If you have missed a dose or took too much of your dabigatran and you are unsure of what to do, contact the DOAC clinic or your pharmacist for advice.