

## What is dabigatran (Pradaxa®)?

- Dabigatran is also called Pradaxa®
- Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) is used to reduce the risk of blood clots and stroke in people with an abnormal heart rhythm known as atrial fibrillation, or in people who have had a blood clot.
  - Blood clots can block a blood vessel cutting off blood supply to the area.
  - Rarely, clots can break into pieces and travel in the blood stream, lodging in the heart (causing a heart attack), the lungs (causing a pulmonary embolus), or in the brain (causing a stroke).
- If you were previously on warfarin and you are starting Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) do not continue taking Warfarin/Coumadin®. Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) replaces Warfarin/Coumadin®.



Pradaxa 75mg capsule



Pradaxa 150mg capsule

## How should I take Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)?

- Take Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) exactly as prescribed by your doctor.
- Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) may be taken with or without food.
- Swallow the capsule whole. Do not break, chew, or empty the pellets from the capsule.
- If you missed a dose:
  - If your next dose is more than 6 hours away: take the dose as soon as you remember.

- If your next dose is less than 6 hours away: skip the missed dose and resume your normal dosing schedule.
- Do not take a double dose of dabigatran to make up for a missed dose.
- Do not stop taking Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) suddenly without telling your doctor. This can put you at risk of having a stroke or a blood clot.
- If you take too much Dabigatran (Pradaxa®), call your doctor or the anticoagulation service. If you are experiencing any bleeding which you cannot get to stop, go to the nearest emergency room.

### **How should I store Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)?**

- Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) may be dispensed in a bottle or in individually separated doses (known as blister packs).
  - Keep the medication in its original container to protect it from moisture.
  - Do not store or place dabigatran capsules in any other container, such as pill boxes or pill organizers.
- Store at room temperature in a dry area (avoid storing it in the bathroom).

### **What should I know about Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)?**

- Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) can increase your risk of bleeding because it lessens your body's ability to clot. While you take Dabigatran (Pradaxa®), you may bruise more easily and it may take longer for bleeding to stop.
- Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) can cause bleeding which can be serious. You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) and:
  - You are over 75 years old
  - You have kidney problems

- You have stomach or intestine bleeding that is recent or recurs, or have a stomach ulcer.
- You take other medications that increase your risk of bleeding, including:
  - Aspirin or products that contain aspirin
  - Long-term use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) including ibuprofen and naproxen.
  - Clopidogrel (Plavix®), prasugrel (Effient®), or ticagrelor (Brilinta®)
  - Any medicine that contains heparin

### **What are the potential side effects of Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)?**

- Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) can increase your risk of bleeding because it lessens your body's ability to clot. While you take Dabigatran (Pradaxa®), you may bruise more easily and it may take longer for bleeding to stop.
- Common side effects include stomach pain, upset stomach, or heartburn.
- In some people, Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) can cause symptoms of an allergic reaction, including hives, rash, and itching. Seek medical attention right away if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
  - Chest pain or chest tightness
  - Swelling of your face or tongue
  - Trouble breathing or wheezing
  - Feeling dizzy or faint

### **When should I call my doctor or anticoagulation service?**

- If you start or stop any medications, including over-the-counter medications or herbal supplements. These may affect the way Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) works.

- You are having a surgery or procedure as you may need to stop taking Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) for a short period of time before your procedure. Do not stop taking dabigatran without first talking with your doctor.
- You need a medication refill (notify them before you are out of Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) so you do not run out).
- If you are unable to afford Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)
- If you experience any unexpected bleeding or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as:
  - Unusual bleeding from the gums
  - Nose bleeds that happen often
  - Menstrual bleeding or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
  - Bruises that happen without a known cause or get larger

### **When should I seek emergency medical help?**

**Call 911** immediately if you experience any of the following serious conditions:

- If you experience any of the following signs and symptoms of bleeding:
  - Bleeding that is severe or bleeding that you cannot control
  - Pink or brown urine
  - Red or black stools (that look like tar)
  - Coughing up blood or blood clots
  - Vomiting up blood or if your vomit looks like “coffee grounds”
- If you experience any of the following signs and symptoms of a stroke:
  - Dizziness, sudden loss of vision, or sudden severe headache
  - Numbness or weakness in any limb
  - Difficulty speaking or slurred speech
  - Drooping on one side of your face.
- If you experience any of the following signs and symptoms of blood clots:
  - Sudden severe shortness of breath, chest pain
  - Swelling, redness, heat, or pain in any limb

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by Michigan Medicine for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by Michigan Medicine and for which Michigan Medicine does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Author: Elizabeth Renner, PharmD  
Reviewers: Nghi Ha, PharmD & Erin Moulard, PharmD

Patient Education by [Michigan Medicine](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#). Last Revised 01/2018