

# Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)

## FAQ



Defining  
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in the 21st Century

### What is dabigatran?

Dabigatran is a “blood-thinner” or anticoagulant, which helps lower the chance of blood clots forming in your body.

### Why do I need dabigatran?

You may need dabigatran to prevent blood clots or because you have had harmful blood clots.

Dabigatran is used for:

- Abnormal heart rhythms (atrial fibrillation)
- Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or blood clots in the legs
- Pulmonary embolism (PE) or blood clots in the lungs

### How do I take rivaroxaban?

- Dabigatran is taken twice a day. ALWAYS follow your label instructions.
- Take with or without food.
- Swallow capsules whole-do not open, break, or chew.
- Do NOT change your dose or stop taking dabigatran unless your doctor tells you to.

### Where do I keep dabigatran?

- Store capsules in the original bottle.
- DO NOT put in a pill box.
- Use dabigatran within 4 months of opening it.

### What if I miss a dose of dabigatran?

- Take your missed dose as soon as you remember.
- Skip the missed dose if it is less than 6 hours until your next dose is due.
- NEVER take 2 doses together to make up for a missed dose.

### What does dabigatran look like?



150mg capsule

### **Can I take other medicines while taking dabigatran?**

- Yes, but other medicines may affect how well dabigatran works.
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist all the medicines you take. This includes prescription and over the counter medicines like vitamins and herbal supplements.

### **What do I do if I am scheduled for a procedure?**

- You may need to stop taking dabigatran before surgeries or procedures to prevent bleeding.
- Make sure that all of your doctors know that you take dabigatran.
- Inform the anticoagulation clinic of all upcoming procedures at least 1 week in advance so the directions to safely skip dabigatran can be provided.

### **What are the side effects with rivaroxaban?**

- Risk of bleeding or bruising
- Stomach problems such as: upset stomach, heart burn, or nausea

### **What are signs of unusual bleeding?**

Seek medical care immediately if you have:

- Severe or prolonged nose bleeds
- Red, dark, or cloudy urine
- Bloody stools or black, tarry stools
- Too much bleeding from minor cuts
- Too much menstrual bleeding
- Vomited blood (old blood may look like coffee grounds)
- Coughed up excessive amounts of blood
- Prolonged severe headaches, backaches, or stomach pain

### **What kind of monitoring is needed for dabigatran?**

Blood tests to monitor kidney function, liver function, and bleeding at least once a year.

#### **Sources**

Dabigatran (Pradaxa®). VA Heart of Texas Health Care Network.

Patient information: Dabigatran (Pradaxa®). Portland VA Medical Center; Portland, OR.

Pradaxa [medication guide]. Ridgefield, CT: Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.; 2013.