



What is dabigatran?

- Dabigatran is an anticoagulant used to prevent blood clots forming by blocking the activity of a clotting protein called thrombin.
- This is frequently prescribed for the following, but your doctor may have other reasons for starting dabigatran:
 - After hip or knee replacement surgery to prevent blood clots forming in the veins of your leg(s) or in your lung(s).
 - For prevention of strokes or serious blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation.
 - For the treatment of blood clots.
- Unlike warfarin, another anticoagulant, it does not require frequent blood tests for international normalized ratio (INR) monitoring while offering similar results in terms of efficacy.

How do I take dabigatran?

- Dabigatran should be taken twice a day regularly at about 12 hour intervals at the same time each day.
- It can be taken with or without food.
- Swallow the capsule whole: do not break open, chew, or crush it.
- Take it as directed: do not take more or less.
- If you forget a dose, take the missed dose as soon as possible.
- If you remember the missed dose less than 6 hours before your next scheduled dose, do not take a double dose. Skip the missed dose, and continue your regular dosing schedule.
- Keep the capsules in its original packaging. Once bottles are open, throw away the leftover capsules after 60 days.

How should I store dabigatran?

- Keep medication in the blister package or container it came in, tightly closed.
- Store at room temperature (15-30°C), away from excess heat and moisture.
- Discard any medication that is left in the container 30 days after you open it.
- Discard any medication still in blister pack after the expiry date.



What should I tell my doctor before I start taking dabigatran?

- BEFORE using dabigatran, talk to your doctor if:
 - You have an increased bleeding risk or have a history of bleeding.
 - You have kidney problems.
 - You are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
 - You are breast feeding or plan to breast feed during treatment.
 - You are going to have **any** surgery, including dental surgery.
 - You are taking any other prescription, over-the-counter medication or herbal product.

What are the side effects of dabigatran?

- The most frequent side effect is easy bruising and prolonged bleeding.
- About one in ten people will get stomach discomfort, heartburn, or nausea. If these don't improve after 1-2 weeks, talk to your doctor.
- Tell your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms:
 - Allergic reactions
 - Blood in urine, stool and/or spit
 - Black tar-like stools
 - Bleeding, bruising, swelling or fluid leaking at your wound site after operation
 - Excessive bleeding (*including bleeding from your nose and gums*)
 - Prolonged or excessive menstrual period or vaginal bleeding
- For any other unexpected side effects, talk to your doctor.

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How long do I have to take dabigatran?

- Depending on your diagnosis, your doctor will help you decide how long you stay on dabigatran.
- Do not stop taking dabigatran without consulting your doctor.
- Continue to take dabigatran as prescribed by your doctor even if you feel well.
- Dabigatran should be discontinued for a short time before and surgical procedure. Your doctor will inform you when to stop and restart taking dabigatran again after your procedure.

Could any of my medications interact with dabigatran?

- Certain medications and herbal products can interact with dabigatran, such as:
 - St. John's Wort
 - Antacids
 - Anticoagulants
 - Antiplatelet agents (eg. aspirin, clopidogrel)
 - NSAIDS (anti-inflammatory drugs)
 - Heart rhythm drugs
 - Drugs to treat fungal infections
 - Some other prescription medications
- Be sure to inform your doctor of all the medications and herbal products you are taking.
- Before starting any new medications or over the counter products, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

What do I do in case of emergency/overdose?

- Contact your doctor immediately if you have taken more than the prescribed dose of dabigatran.
- Symptoms of overdose may include: unusual bruising or bleeding; pink or brown urine; vomiting material that is bloody or looks like coffee grounds.
- In case of overdose, immediately call a doctor, hospital emergency department or local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 even if no symptoms are observed.