Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)

To reduce your bleeding and clotting risk it is important that you attend follow-up appointments with your provider, and have blood tests done as your provider orders.

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®.

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:
  o If your next dose is more than 6 hours away: take the dose as soon as you remember.
  o If your next dose is less than 6 hours away: skip the missed dose and resume your normal dosing schedule.
  o 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).
  o Keep the medication in its original container to protect it from moisture.
  o 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:
  o You are over 75 years old
  o You have kidney problems
  o You have stomach or intestine bleeding that is recent or recurs, or have a stomach ulcer.
  o 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®)?**

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• 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:
  o Chest pain or chest tightness
  o Swelling of your face or tongue
  o Trouble breathing or wheezing
  o 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:
  o Sudden severe shortness of breath, chest pain
  o Swelling, redness, heat, or pain in any limb