Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOACs)

Name of DOAC

_____

Dose of DOAC

_____

Reason for using:

_____

Use until:

_____

Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOACs)
DOACs are blood thinners that make your blood take longer to clot. DOACs are different from other oral blood thinners since your diet and vitamin K will not impact them. They also do not require frequent lab draws to adjust the dose.

DOACs include:

- Eliquis (apixaban)
- Xarelto (rivaroxaban)
- Pradaxa (dabigatran)
- Savaysa (edoxaban)

Reasons to Take a Blood Thinner
Blood thinners may be used to:

- **Prevent strokes** in patients that have a heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation.
- **Treat blood clots** in your arms, legs, or lungs, sometimes called deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or pulmonary embolism (PE).
- **Prevent blood clots** in patients that are at risk, such as people who have had a blood clot in the past or people having major surgery (e.g. orthopedic surgery).

Do not take if:

- Patients with mechanical heart valves should not take a DOAC because of the increased risk of bleeding and blood clots.
- Patients with poor kidney or liver function should check with their doctor or pharmacist to find out if a DOAC is right for them.
- Patients on medicines that may interact strongly with DOACs. Your pharmacist or doctor should review your other medicines before starting.
- Patients with antiphospholipid antibody syndrome.

Cost
Your cost will depend on your insurance plan. Some patients may be able to get copay assistance cards. Ask your pharmacist if this is an option for you.

Drug Names	Apixaban (**Eliquis**®)	Rivaroxaban (**Xarelto**®)	Dabigatran (**Pradaxa**®)	Edoxaban (**Savaysa**®)
FDA approved for:	Stroke prevention DVT and PE VTE prevention after hip replacement	Stroke prevention DVT and PE VTE prevention after hip and knee replacement	Stroke prevention DVT and PE VTE prevention after hip and knee replacement	Stroke prevention DVT and PE
Dosing How often do I take this drug?	Twice daily	Once to twice daily	Twice daily	Once daily
Onset How long does it take to work in my body?	Fast	Fast	Fast	Fast
Kidney Function Should my kidney function be checked before starting this drug?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Food Effect Do I need to take it with food?	No	Yes, for doses over 10 mg	No	No
Reversal Agents Can this medicine be reversed?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

DVT = Deep Vein Thrombosis; PE = Pulmonary Embolism; VTE= Venous Thromboembolic Event

Surgery and Procedure
You may need to stop taking a medicine for several days to prevent bleeding if you have a surgery or procedure. Let your health care team know you are taking a blood thinner.

Who to call:_____

Phone number: _____

Type of procedure: _____

Date of procedure:
_____

Stop taking your blood thinner _____ days before your procedure.

Interactions with Other Medicines
Tell your doctor or pharmacist all medicines you are taking. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements.

Sometimes your dose can be changed if you take a medicine that interacts with a DOAC.

Alcohol Use
Limit alcohol to no more than 1 drink per day, or no more than 1 to 2 drinks on special occasions. Drinking can increase your risk for falling and bleeding.

Common Side Effects
Bleeding is the most common side effect.

Minor Bleeding
- Gums that bleed while you brush your teeth.
- Bruising more than usual.
- Occasional nose bleeds.
- Prolonged menstrual bleeding.
- Prolonged bleeding after minor cuts.

Seek Urgent Medical Help
Symptoms of major bleeding include:
- Any bleeding that you can't stop after 10 minutes.
- Red, black or tarry stools.
- Vomiting or coughing up blood or "coffee grounds."
- Severe headache or stomachache.

If you have a serious fall or hit your head, go to the Emergency Room right away and let your provider know that you are on a blood thinner.

Signs and Symptoms of a Clot

Blood Clot (in lungs, arms, legs)	Stroke (Clot in brain)
• Chest pain, shortness of breath • Pain and swelling in arms or leg that is new	• Sudden weakness or numbness on one side of body • Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding • Sudden vision changes

If you are pregnant or become pregnant, tell your doctor right away. We don't know how DOACs affect a fetus. You may need other treatment options.

Medical Alert Information
In case of an emergency or accident you should wear a medical-alert bracelet or necklace or carry an ID card. This alerts the healthcare team you take a blood thinner. Ask your local pharmacy or doctor how you can get these.

Resources
- UW Health Anticoagulation Services website: www.uwhealth.org/anticoagulation
- National Blood Clot Alliance; http://www.stoptheclot.org
- North American Thrombosis Forum: www.thrombosis.org/patients
- American Heart Association – Atrial Fibrillation: http://www.supportnetwork.heart.org/s/myafibmain
- American Heart Association – Heart Valves: https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-valve-problems-and-disease

Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOAC) Quiz
Select the best answer for each question.

1. How often do you need your blood levels checked while on a DOAC?
    a. Checking blood levels is not required.
    b. Once every week.
    c. Once a year.
    d. Checked daily.

2. How should you change your diet while on your DOAC?
    a. Eat less green leafy vegetables.
    b. Watch for food that is high in Vitamin K.
    c. You do not need to adjust your diet on a DOAC.
    d. Eat more green leafy vegetables.

3. What should you do if you miss a dose of your DOAC?
    a. Take my dose as soon as I remember it. If it is closer to the next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to my normal dosing schedule.
    b. Nothing – it is okay to skip one dose.
    c. Take an extra pill to "catch" up.

4. Who should you tell that you take a DOAC?
    a. All of my providers (doctors, nurses, physician assistants).
    b. My dentist.
    c. My pharmacist.
    d. All of the above

Quiz answers
1. A
2. C
3. A
4. D

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 9/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7826.