

Direct oral anticoagulation (DOAC) therapy - Rivaroxaban for blood clots

Patient Information

What is Rivaroxaban?

Rivaroxaban is a clot preventing drug. A blood clot is a lump of blood that can form inside your body. Rivaroxaban does not break a clot down. It stops the clot getting bigger and helps prevent new clots. Your body will clear the clot over time. You are taking it because you had a blood clot in a vein (for example a clot in the leg or clot in the lung).

How much do I take?

Days 1-21: take one 15 mg tablet, twice a day.

After day 21: take one tablet, once a day. This may be 15 mg or 20 mg. Your doctor or clinic will tell you. You may be started on one tablet, once a day from day one or sooner than day 21. Your healthcare professional or clinic will tell you.

How do I take it?

Take it at the same time every day. If you take it twice a day, try to take doses 12 hours apart. Take with food.

How long will I take it?

It depends on your health and history. Many people take rivaroxaban for at least three months after they have the blood clot. Some people need it for six months or longer. Your clinic or healthcare professional will advise you.

If you forget a dose?

If you take 15 mg twice a day:

Take the missed tablet as soon as you remember.

Do not take more than two 15 mg tablets in one day.

If you missed a dose, you may take two 15 mg tablets together, so you still have 30 mg in that day.

The next day, go back to one 15 mg tablet twice a day.

If you take 20 mg once a day or 15 mg once a day:

Take the missed tablet as soon as you remember that day.

Do not take an extra tablet to make up for a missed dose.

The next day, continue with one tablet once a day.

Tip: use a pill box or set a phone alarm.

If you often forget tablets

Missing tablets raises your risk of another clot.

Speak to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for help.

Dental work or operations

Tell your healthcare team before any operation or dental treatment. They will decide what to do about your rivaroxaban before and after your procedure. You should get clear instructions, both spoken and written, about what to stop and when. Each case is different, so it is important to follow their advice to avoid your procedure being cancelled or having serious bleeding.

Side effects?

Important: bleeding or bruising

The main side effect is unexpected bleeding or bruising (about 1-2 in 100 people).

Call 999 or go to the Emergency Department if you have:

- a nosebleed that lasts over 10 minutes
- bleeding that will not stop
- blood in vomit or spit
- bleeding gums
- pink or brown wee (urine)
- black or bloody poo
- a sudden, very bad headache
- a hit to the head

Other common effects

Heavier periods can happen. If worried, contact your doctor or clinic. Some people get feeling sick (nausea), diarrhoea, or heartburn. If these carry on, contact your GP or clinic.

Can bleeding be reversed?

Serious bleeding in the gut can be reversed. There is no specific reversal for some other bleeding sites. In those cases, doctors use supportive measures.

Will I need blood tests?

Your kidneys should be checked before you start and then at least once a year if you keep taking it. If you get kidney problems (infection or abnormal tests), contact your clinic or doctor. Your dose may need to change.

Other medicines

Your team will review your medicines before you start. Always tell your doctor or pharmacist if your medicines change, if you buy over-the-counter tablets, or if you want to take herbal remedies. Avoid aspirin or ibuprofen unless your doctor prescribes them (they can increase bleeding). For pain, paracetamol (and sometimes codeine) is usually advised. Tell all healthcare staff you take rivaroxaban (including your dentist). Keep an up-to-date list of your medicines.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Rivaroxaban is not recommended if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. If you want to get pregnant, talk to your doctor first. If your period is a week late, do a pregnancy test. If positive, contact your doctor urgently. If negative, test again after a few days. If still negative and your period does not start, seek advice.

Alcohol

Rivaroxaban does not interact with alcohol. Drink in moderation and stay within UK guidelines.

Rivaroxaban checklist

Please do:

- report any bleeding or bruising
- take with food
- take the prescribed dose
- eat a healthy, normal diet
- carry your anticoagulant alert card
- give your alert card to your doctor/nurse/dentist/pharmacist at each visit
- attend all clinic appointments

Please do NOT:

- take aspirin or medicines with aspirin unless prescribed
- take ibuprofen or similar medicines unless prescribed
- miss doses unless your doctor tells you to
- take an extra dose (except as explained in the missed dose rules for 15 mg twice daily)
- run out of tablets - order more before you are low

Questions?

In hospital:

Speak to your healthcare professional.

At home:

Contact the department that started rivaroxaban or speak to a pharmacist at your local pharmacy.

Video

Scan the QR code below to watch a video about rivaroxaban.



Or watch here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcivRE006NU.

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