Rivaroxaban or Apixaban following treatment for COVID-19

Why do I need to take anticoagulation following treatment for COVID-19?
Patients with COVID-19 appear to be at higher risk of blood clots as complications of the disease. Anticoagulants such as rivaroxaban or apixaban increase the time it takes for your blood to clot and will reduce your risk of experiencing blood clots.

How long do I take anticoagulation for?
You will need to take rivaroxaban/apixaban for two weeks after discharge.

How do I take the medication?
You should take your medication according to the label on your medicine. Take your medication at about the same time every day.

The medication should be taken with food and should be ideally be swallowed whole with water.

If you have trouble swallowing, you can crush rivaroxaban/apixaban.

What do I do if I forget to take my medication?
If a dose is missed, take the next dose as soon as you remember. Do not take more than one dose in a single day. Take your next dose the following day at the usual time.

Are there any side effects?
The most common side-effects are indigestion and/or minor bruising; you may also experience minor bleeding.

Indigestion/nausea: try taking your medication after food. If symptoms persist, consult your GP.

Diarrhoea/loose stools: Consult your GP.

Minor bruising/minor bleeding: Consult your GP or NHS 111.

Serious side-effects
The most serious side effect of rivaroxaban therapy is bleeding or bruising.

If you cut yourself, apply firm pressure to the site for at least five minutes using a clean, dry dressing.

You should seek medical advice immediately by attending your A&E (Emergency Department), if you experience any of the following symptoms:
- vomiting or coughing up blood
- if you suffer a major injury or are unable to stop bleeding
• if you have a fall or injure yourself while on this treatment especially if you hit your head
• prolonged nose bleeds (more than ten minutes)
• pass blood in your urine (pink or brown in colour)
• passing blood in your stool (red or black in colour)
• unexplained dizziness or weakness
• sudden severe headache
• unusual, severe or spontaneous bruising
• for women, heavy or increased bleeding during your period or any other vaginal bleeding

What can affect the control of my anticoagulation?
• Make sure your GP knows if you are taking any other medicines. Some drugs can interact with rivaroxaban/apixaban, ensure you inform your doctor if you are given a prescription for another drug.

• You should not take aspirin or clopidogrel unless it has specifically been prescribed by your doctor. It is also advisable to avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like diclofenac or ibuprofen.

• If you purchase any over the counter medication or herbal remedies consult your pharmacist first to ensure these are safe to take with rivaroxaban.

• You must not take this medication if you have a condition which puts you at significant risk of major bleeding.

• How well rivaroxaban works is not affected by alcohol. If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation and within recommended guidelines.

• Maintain a healthy and balanced diet.

Who must I tell that I take anticoagulant therapy?
• Tell any doctor or health care professional prescribing you medicine that you currently take anticoagulant therapy. They will advise you which medicines are safe to take with your anticoagulant.

• Tell your pharmacist if you are planning to buy any over the counter or herbal medicines.

• Tell your dentist, or any health worker involved in your medical care.

• You should carry your alert card with you at all times. If you lose your card please contact the outpatient anticoagulation service for a replacement card.
Other questions?

- We recommend that women do not become pregnant while taking anticoagulant therapy. Please consult your Family Planning clinic or GP regarding contraception.
- If you think you may be pregnant contact your GP immediately for advice as these medicines should not be taken during pregnancy.
- You should not breast feed whilst taking these medicines.
- Women may experience heavier periods while you are taking anticoagulant therapy.
- If you need further supplies of your medication, contact your GP unless you have been advised otherwise.

We are a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Other formats:

If you would like this information in another language or audio, please contact Interpreting services on telephone: 01223 256998, or email: interpreting@addenbrookes.nhs.uk For Large Print information please contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

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Authors: Consultant Pharmacist
Pharmacist: Deputy Consultant Pharmacist
Department: Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
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