

Apixaban (Eliquis) for the treatment of deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism

Information for patients

This leaflet provides further information on apixaban, which you have been prescribed. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

What is apixaban and what is it used for?

- Apixaban is an anticoagulant medicine
- Anticoagulants reduce the risk of blood clots developing and prevent extension of an existing blood clot

Why have I been prescribed apixaban?

As you have been diagnosed with a deep vein thrombosis (clot in the veins of your leg(s)) or a pulmonary embolism (clot in the blood vessels of the lungs), the apixaban is used to reduce the chances of further or new clot development.





Benefits of apixaban?

It cuts your risk of developing deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism again, and the complications associated with either of these conditions.

How do I take apixaban?

- Apixaban is best taken at the same time each day
- Apixaban tablets can be taken before or after food
- There are no restrictions on food that can be eaten whilst taking apixaban.

If you have been newly diagnosed with a blood clot then at first you need to take **10mg twice a day** about 12 hours apart. Take each dose at the same times each day for **one** week. After this you take **5mg twice a day**.

<u>At first</u>	<u>Then</u>
Morning: 	Morning: 
Evening: 	Evening: 
10 mg twice a day for one week	5mg twice a day

- It is very important that you take your apixaban as advised. Missing doses may increase the chance of the clot growing or new clots forming
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember.

How long do I need to take apixaban for?

Some patients need to take it for between 3 to 6 months and then it's safe for them to stop. Some patients need to take apixaban long-term.

The doctor looking after you will decide on exactly how long you need to take apixaban for.

What happens if I need to take apixaban long-term?

After a minimum of 6 months treatment with apixaban, if the doctor thinks it's best for you to stay on apixaban long-term, then the doctor will decide what dose of apixaban is most suitable for you, depending on your individual level of risk of the clot coming back. The dose of apixaban at this point can vary from 5mg or 2.5mg twice a day.

Your doctor will tell you which is the best dose for you.

What are the risks?

Bleeding is a possible side effect of taking **any** anticoagulant and occasionally it can be serious. Serious bleeding affects 1 to 3 people out of 100.

You should seek medical help straight away if you have bleeding, especially if you have any of the following:

- coughing or vomiting blood
- black stools or blood in your stools
- severe, persistent headache, dizziness or weakness
- fall or injury to your head or face
- blood in your urine
- unexplained or severe bruising
- persistent nose bleeds
- other unexpected or uncontrollable bleeding

If you have any concerns about these risks, your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will discuss these with you in more detail.

Are there any alternatives?

There are other anticoagulants you may be able to take. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will discuss these with you, if appropriate.

Do I need blood tests when taking apixaban?

You will need to have blood tests before you start apixaban and then at least once a year thereafter (if you remain on apixaban long-term). Occasionally, specialist blood tests may be required on your doctor's advice.

Can I take other medicines with apixaban?

It is important to let the doctor, nurse or pharmacist who prescribes apixaban know all the other medicines you are currently taking. This includes any medicines you buy over the counter, because they might interfere with apixaban and affect how it works.

If you start a new medicine, please tell the doctor that you are taking apixaban.

If you are unsure about whether you can take a particular medicine with apixaban, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for advice.

What else do I need to know when taking apixaban?

- Your risk of bleeding is increased – please take this into account before considering taking part in activities with a high risk of injury such as contact sports
- It is not known if apixaban is safe to use during pregnancy. If you become pregnant or plan to become pregnant, tell your doctor straight away
- To reduce your risks of bleeding during surgery, minor procedures or dental work, please tell your doctor or dentist that you are on apixaban. You may need to stop taking it for a short time
- The anticoagulation clinic will give you an alert card. Carry this in your wallet or purse to make sure people know you are taking an anticoagulant

How do I find out more about apixaban?

Please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or anticoagulation clinic for more information.

You can also call King's College Hospital anticoagulation clinics:

Tel: 020 3299 5553 King's College Hospital
Tel: 01689 864263 Princess Royal University Hospital

How do I find out more about deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism?

Please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or anticoagulation clinic for more information.

You can also visit the Thrombosis UK website for further information:

<https://www.thrombosisuk.org/>

Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Care provided by students

King's is a teaching hospital where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS:

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net

You can also contact us by using our online form at www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND.

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.