



## Dabigatran Therapy



**Do not take dabigatran if you are or think you are pregnant, or while breast feeding.**

## What is dabigatran?

Dabigatran is an anticoagulant (*often called a blood thinner*) used to treat or prevent blood clots:

- After hip or knee replacement surgery to prevent blood clots forming in your legs or in your lungs
- For prevention of strokes or serious blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation
- For the treatment of blood clots

Unlike warfarin, another anticoagulant, it does not require blood tests for monitoring.

Find out more at:  
[www.ThrombosisBC.ca](http://www.ThrombosisBC.ca)



### How do I take dabigatran?

- Dabigatran is taken twice a day about 12 hours apart.
- It should be taken at about same time each day, within an hour or so.
- It can be taken with or without food.
- Swallow the capsule whole: do not break open, chew, or crush it.
- If you forget a dose, take the missed dose as soon as possible.

### How should I store dabigatran?

- Keep the capsules in its original packaging (*blister pack or bottle*).
- Once bottles are open, throw away the leftover capsules after 60 days and keep lid tightly closed.

### What should I tell my doctor before I start taking dabigatran?

- You have an increased risk of bleeding or history of bleeding.
- You have liver or kidney problems.
- You are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- You are breast feeding or plan to breast feed during treatment.
- You are going to have **any** surgery, including dental surgery.
- You are taking any other prescription, over-the-counter medication or herbal product.

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## What are the side effects of dabigatran?

- The most frequent side effect is easy bruising and bleeding that takes longer to stop.
- About one in ten people will get stomach discomfort, heartburn, or nausea. If these don't improve after 1-2 weeks, talk to your doctor.
- Tell your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms:
  - Allergic reactions (*rash, swelling, itchiness*)
  - Blood in urine, stool and/or spit
  - Black tar-like stools
  - Bleeding, bruising, swelling or fluid leaking at your wound site after operation
  - Excessive bleeding (*including bleeding from your nose and gums*)
  - Prolonged or excessive menstrual period or vaginal bleeding
- For any other unexpected side effects, talk to your doctor.

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## How long do I have to take dabigatran?

- This depends on the reason for taking dabigatran.
- Do not stop taking dabigatran without consulting your doctor.
- Continue to take dabigatran as prescribed by your doctor even if you feel well.
- Dabigatran should be discontinued for a short time before and after any surgical procedure. Your doctor will inform you when to stop and restart taking dabigatran again after your procedure.



## Could any of my medications interact with dabigatran?

- Dabigatran might not be right for you if you are also taking any one of these:
  - St. John's wort
  - Antacids
  - Anti-platelet agents (*eg. aspirin, clopidogrel*)
  - Anti-inflammatory drugs (*eg. NSAIDs, naproxen*)
  - Some heart rhythm drugs (*eg. dronedarone*)
  - Some chemotherapy or cancer treatment drugs (*eg. doxorubicin, TKIs*)
  - Some drugs to prevent seizures (*eg. carbamazepine*)
  - Some antibiotics (*eg. clarithromycin*)
  - Some drugs to treat fungal infections (*eg. ketoconazole*)
  - Some anti-organ rejection drugs (*eg. cyclosporine*)
  - Some drugs to treat HIV/AIDS (*eg. ritonavir*)
  - Some other prescription medications
- Be sure to inform your doctor of all the medications and herbal products you are taking.
- Before starting any new medications or over the counter products, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.



## What do I do in case of emergency/overdose?

- Contact your doctor immediately if you have taken more than the prescribed dose of dabigatran.
- In case of overdose, immediately call a doctor, hospital emergency department or local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 even if no symptoms are observed.

