

# Apixaban for stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation

## Patient information leaflet

**If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.**

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

# What is Apixaban and what is it used for?

This leaflet provides information about a medicine you have been prescribed called apixaban, including the risks and the benefits. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Apixaban is an anticoagulant medicine. This type of medicine is sometimes called a blood thinning medication, although it does not actually make your blood thinner. Anticoagulants reduce the risk of blood clots developing.

## Why have I been prescribed apixaban?

You have an irregular heart beat (atrial fibrillation) which can increase your chance of having a stroke

On average, over a year, about 1 to 20 people out of 100 with atrial fibrillation will have a stroke. Apixaban can reduce your risk of having a stroke.

## How do I take apixaban?

- Take one tablet twice a day (morning and evening).
- You can take it with or without food.
- You do not have to avoid any particular food.

It is very important that you take apixaban as advised. Missing doses may increase your risk of having a stroke.

If you do miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. But do not take double your dose to make up for a missed dose.

Apixaban comes in two strengths; 2.5mg and 5mg. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will let you know how much you should take each day.

## What are the risks?

Bleeding is a possible side effect of taking any anticoagulant and occasionally it can be serious. Serious bleeding affects one to three people out of 100. If you already take an anticoagulant, you should not be at increased risk of bleeding by switching to apixaban.

Your doctor will advise you on the balance between the benefit of preventing strokes and the risk of bleeding.

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 them with you in more detail.

## What are the benefits?

It cuts your risk of having a stroke.

## 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 have a blood test before starting apixaban and then at least once a year after that time, if you stay on apixaban long term.

## Can I take other medicines with Apixaban?

It is important to let the doctor 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. You should avoid anti-inflammatory medicines including ibuprofen as these can increase the risk of bleeding. You should also avoid aspirin unless you have been advised to continue by your doctor. If you are not able to use paracetamol, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for advice.

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 taking 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 our anticoagulation clinic:

Whiston Hospital  
Telephone: 0151 290 4176

Out of hours, contact 111 by phone or online.

### How do I find out more about atrial fibrillation?

Please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or anticoagulation clinic for more information. You can also visit the British Heart Foundation website for more information:

[www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/conditions/atrial-fibrillation](http://www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/conditions/atrial-fibrillation)

## 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. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

### PALS

Whiston Hospital,  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot,  
Merseyside,  
L35 5DR.

Telephone: 0151 430 1376

### PALS

Southport Hospital,  
Town Lane,  
Southport,  
Merseyside,  
PR8 6PN.

Telephone: 01704 704 703

Southport Hospital  
Town Lane, Kew, Southport,  
Merseyside, PR8 6PN  
Telephone: 01704 547 471

Ormskirk Hospital  
Dicconson Way, Wigan Road,  
Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 2AZ  
Telephone: 01695 577 111

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road, Prescot,  
Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital  
Marshalls Cross Road, St Helens,  
Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 26633