Dabigatran
(da-bi-GAT-ran)

Brand name: Pradaxa

Why is this drug prescribed?
Dabigatran is an anticoagulant. “ANTI” means against and “COAGULANT” refers to the clotting of blood. Dabigatran is a medicine ordered by your doctor to prevent harmful blood clots from forming. It does not dissolve existing clots. Sometimes dabigatran is referred to as a “blood thinner”, but it does not actually thin your blood. Dabigatran is often prescribed to people with a heart rhythm problem called atrial fibrillation. Atrial fibrillation increases the risk of a clot forming in the heart. A clot in the heart can dislodge and cause a stroke. Dabigatran is used in patients with atrial fibrillation to prevent formation of a clot in the heart and lower the risk of stroke.

How should this drug be taken?
• Dabigatran comes in oral capsules.
• Take dabigatran by mouth two times each day: in the morning and in the evening.
• Do not open, crush, or chew the capsules. Swallow the capsule whole.
• Never stop taking dabigatran unless told to do so by your doctor.
• Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse to explain anything that you do not understand.

What should I do if I forget to take a dose?
• If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember.
• If you have less than 6 hours to go before the next dose is due, skip the missed dose.
• NEVER take a double dose to make up for the missed dose.

How do I store this medicine?
• Store the capsules in the original bottle from the pharmacy. NEVER place the capsules in a pill organizer (pill box).
• After the bottle is opened, it must be used within 4 months. Do not open more than one bottle at a time. If you have not used all of the capsules within 4 months of opening the bottle, throw the remaining capsules away and open a new bottle.
• Store at room temperature away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.
What side effects can this drug cause? What can I do about them?

Tell your doctor right away if you have these side effects:

- Unusual bleeding:
  - Vomiting blood or brown material that looks like coffee grounds
  - Coughing up blood
  - Nose bleeds
  - Black or red tarry stools
  - Bruises that appear without injury
  - Bleeding from cuts that do not stop with pressure
  - Frequent bleeding from gums
  - Blood in your urine
  - Excessive vaginal bleeding or menstrual flow
- Weakness, lightheadedness, dizziness or fainting
- Itching or hives
- Swelling in your face, hands, mouth or throat
- Difficulty breathing or chest tightness

Talk with your doctor if you have these less serious side effects:

- Nausea, vomiting
- Stomach upset or pain, heartburn, indigestion
- If any side effects cause you to stop taking dabigatran, tell your doctor right away

What drug-drug interactions are there?

- Tell your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse what other medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins or herbal products you are taking. Before starting any new medicine (including non-prescription or herbal products), talk with your doctor or pharmacist to be sure it is safe for you to take while on dabigatran.

- Make sure your doctor knows if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Dronedarone (Multaq)
  - Ketoconazole (Nizoral)
  - Rifampin (Rifadin, Rimactane)

- Unless instructed by your doctor, do not take dabigatran with:
  - Warfarin (Coumadin, Jantoven)
  - Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)
What other precautions should I follow while using this drug?

- **Serious, life-threatening bleeding can occur from dabigatran use.**
- Make sure your doctor knows if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Dabigatran may cause harm to the unborn baby and may be harmful to breastfed babies.
- Make sure your doctor knows if you have kidney disease, liver disease, a stomach ulcer, or any other medical problems.
- Tell your doctors, dentists, or pharmacists that you are on dabigatran. Carry a card in your wallet or purse that shows that you take dabigatran. Consider purchasing a MedicAlert necklace or bracelet.
- You may bleed and bruise more easily while you use dabigatran. Avoid activities such as rough sports or other situations that could cause bruising, cuts, or serious bleeding. Report any falls or blows to the head to your doctor immediately. Brush and floss your teeth gently.
- Do not allow anyone else to take your medicine.

You may be at increased risk of bleeding if you combine dabigatran with:

- Clopidogrel (Plavix)
- Prasugrel (Effient)
- Ticagrelor (Brilinta)
- Ticlopidine (Ticlid)
- Dipyridamole (Persantine)
- Drugs that dissolve clots including: alteplase (ActiVase), reteplase (Retavase), streptokinase (Streptase), tenecteplase (TNKase)
- Prescription and non-prescription pain and arthritis medicines:
  - Aspirin (your doctor may approve a daily aspirin with dabigatran)
  - NSAIDS: ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, others), naproxen (Naprosyn, Aleve, others), celecoxib (Celebrex), diclofenac (Voltaren), diflunisal (Dolobid), etodolac (Lodine), fenoprofen (Nalfon), indomethacin (Indocin), ketoprofen (Orudis), nabumetone (Relafen), piroxicam (Feldene), sulindac (Clinoril), tolmetin (Tolectin)

Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.

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