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The Royal Liverpool
and Broadgreen
University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Patient information

Clopidogrel

Pharmacy and Cardiology

You have been given a medicine called Clopidogrel.

Why has my doctor given me clopidogrel and what are the benefits?

Clopidogrel can be used for various reasons. It is used for patients who have had a heart attack, or who have angina, to reduce the risk of having a heart attack. It can also be used to reduce the risk of having a stroke.

Clopidogrel is usually used for patients who cannot have aspirin. Sometimes it may be combined with aspirin, usually for a maximum of 12 months at which point it should be reviewed by your doctor.

If you have been taking aspirin and clopidogrel for 12 months please see your General Practitioner (GP).

Check with your doctor if you are still not sure why you need clopidogrel.

How does it work?

Clopidogrel helps to prevent blood clots forming in the blood vessels which feed the heart muscle and other organs. Clots can block these vessels and cause a heart attack or other problems with your circulation, e.g. a stroke.

How should I take my clopidogrel?

Always follow the instructions on the label, which will usually mean that you have to take your clopidogrel once a day.

Do not stop taking this medicine unless your doctor tells you to. You should inform your doctor or dentist that you are taking clopidogrel before any surgery or treatment is arranged.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

Take it as soon as you remember. If it is nearly time for the next dose, do not take the one you missed. Take the next dose at the usual time.

Do not double the next dose.

What are the risks of clopidogrel?

There are risks and benefits of taking all medicines however your doctor will discuss why there are more benefits than risks for you taking clopidogrel. There are some side effects to all medicines.

What are the side effects of clopidogrel?

All medicines have side effects. Not everybody will experience side effects.

Clopidogrel can cause an upset stomach or heartburn. If you develop heartburn or indigestion, or your bowel motions become black, contact your doctor for more advice.

Some people may experience:

- A rash.
- Feeling sick.
- Diarrhoea.
- Constipation.

If you are taking clopidogrel it can take longer for your blood to clot and you may notice that if you cut yourself you may bleed for a little longer.

Very rarely clopidogrel can cause severe bleeding, please tell your GP immediately if you have any marked bruising or evidence of blood loss.

Can I take other medicines while taking clopidogrel?

You must not take any medicines containing aspirin unless prescribed by your doctor. It is important that you check with your doctor or pharmacist before you take any other medicines, including ones that you buy, especially cold or flu remedies. A suitable alternative for pain relief is paracetamol.

Are there any alternative treatments available?

If you have been prescribed clopidogrel it is the most appropriate treatment for you. If you have any side effects please discuss with your doctor as they may be able to prescribe an alternative medicine.

What will happen if I decide not to have treatment?

If you decide not to take clopidogrel you will not get any of the benefits. You must discuss this with your doctor as they need to know if you are not taking it and may be able to prescribe an alternative.

This leaflet is not a substitute for any advice that your doctor, nurse or pharmacist may give you.

You can get more detailed information from the manufacturer's information leaflet.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated

Further Information

NHS website www.nhs.uk

**NHS 111 - 111 is the non-emergency number for urgent medical advice
Tel: 111**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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