

Apixaban (Eliquis)

Apixaban (Eliquis®) is a medication that prevents blood clots from forming in your blood. It may be called an anticoagulant or “blood thinner.” Apixaban does not actually thin the blood. It works to prevent new clots from forming and existing clots from becoming bigger and causing more serious problems.

Apixaban does not dissolve clots that already have formed. It is used to prevent harmful clotting related to certain blood vessel, heart and lung conditions.

Take apixaban exactly as prescribed at the same time each day.

Dosage and administration

Your physician or pharmacist will choose the correct dose of apixaban based on your age, weight, how well your kidneys are working and what other medicines you take.

Take apixaban exactly as prescribed at the same time each day, in the morning and at night. You can take apixaban tablets with or without food. Do not stop taking apixaban unless your physician tells you to stop.

Do not run out of apixaban. Refill your prescription before you run out. The clot-fighting effects of apixaban begin to wear off in about 24 hours.

Missed dose

If you miss a dose of apixaban, take it as soon as you remember, unless it is close to your next dose. If it is close to your next dose, skip the dose you missed and wait to take your next scheduled dose as normal. This way, you do not take a double or extra dose. Then, resume your regular dosing schedule.

Alcohol

It is best to avoid alcohol while taking apixaban. This is because alcohol can increase the risk of bleeding in your stomach and intestines.

Drug/herbal interactions

Some over-the-counter nonprescription medications can increase or decrease the effect of apixaban. It is important to talk with your physician or pharmacist before you use aspirin or other pain medications known as NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs). When buying a pain reliever, always read the label ingredients and ask your physician, nurse or pharmacist for advice if you are unsure what it contains.

A few common over-the-counter medications to avoid are these:

Aspirin-Containing Medications	NSAIDs
▪ Excedrin®	▪ Ibuprofen (Advil®, Midol®)
▪ Anacin®	▪ Naproxen (Aleve®)
▪ Bufferin®	

Avoid cold or sinus medicine, laxatives, and antacids that contain aspirin or NSAIDs.

Bleeding and what to do about it

Apixaban can increase your risk of bleeding. Be careful when performing activities that could cause injury, a cut or bruising.

- Report any falls, blows to the body or head, or other injuries to your physician.
- Place a non-slip bath mat in the tub to prevent accidents.
- Be careful to avoid cutting yourself. This includes taking special care when brushing your teeth and shaving. Use a soft toothbrush and floss gently. Use an electric shaver rather than a manual razor with blades.
- If you cut yourself, apply pressure to the area for 5 minutes to make sure the bleeding has stopped.
- It is important that you carry identification, such as a MedicAlert® bracelet, stating that you are taking apixaban, so you can get proper treatment in case of an emergency.

When to call your physician

Notify your physician right away or go to the Emergency Department if any of the following occur:

Signs of bleeding

- Bleeding from cuts or wounds that does not stop
- Nosebleed
- Coughing up blood
- Blood in urine, stool or vomit
- Black stool (if you are not taking iron supplements)
- Bloody gums

- Unusual bruising or change in skin color
- Dizziness or faintness
- Stomach or intestinal upset
- Continuing headaches
- Unusually heavy menstrual bleeding

Signs of clotting

- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling and/or redness in the legs or arms
- Pain when walking, or pain and warmth in the legs or arms

Please ask questions to make certain you understand how much apixaban to take and when to take it. Please call your physician if you have any questions.