

Patient Counselling information for NOACs – a checklist for healthcare professionals

- Ensure that the patient has been supplied with the relevant NOAC patient booklet. These can be obtained from - Rivaroxaban wendy.robertson@bayer.com, Apixaban Tamas.Ahmed@pfizer.com Dabigatran kate.mullar.ext@boehringer-ingenelheim.com
- **Patient Alert Card** - Patient should be advised to carry the Patient Alert Card (found inside the booklet) with them at all times
- **Adherence** - Ensure patient understands importance of adherence and taking the NOAC regularly
 - once daily – take at the same time each day, morning or night whichever is easiest to remember once daily
 - twice daily – take morning and night, 12 hours apart
- **Specific administration instructions**
 - Dabigatran - Swallow whole with or without food – do NOT chew or open the capsule and keep capsule in original packaging – do NOT transfer capsule to an administration aid such as a dosette box
 - Rivaroxaban - Swallow whole with food. Can be transferred into a dosette box
 - Apixaban - Swallow whole with or without food. Can be transferred into a dosette box
- **Monitoring with NOACs** - Unlike warfarin, NOACs have a consistent effect and do not require INR monitoring. However, it is important that patients are reviewed regularly and have blood tests to check kidney function:
 - before you start a NOAC (FBC and liver function)
 - at least once a year – especially if you are over 75 or have kidney problems (at least 6 monthly on dabigatran). Your GP will advise about the frequency of the tests.
- **Other medicines** - Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines including prescribed medications, vitamins and minerals, herbal supplements.
To minimise the risk of medication interactions with NOACs, let your doctor, pharmacist or nurse know:
 - what regular medications you are taking before starting a NOAC
 - that you are taking a NOAC before you start any new medicines or complementary therapy
 - your NOAC may interact with other medications
- **Missed doses** - Ensure that the patient knows what to do about missed doses as per the relevant NOAC booklet. In summary:
 - For rivaroxaban od, patient should take forgotten dose up till 12h or for dabigatran and apixaban bd, 6h after scheduled intake
 - otherwise skip dose and take next dose as scheduled
- **Alcohol** - Alcohol can interact with NOACs and have an effect on bleeding. The patient should be advised to avoid heavy or binge drinking while taking a NOAC. Small amounts (1–2 standard drinks per day) should not cause problems
- **NOACs and bleeding** – ensure that the patient is aware of the signs and symptoms of unusual bleeding and the need to seek urgent medical attention, as per the advice in the NOAC booklet. Tell your GP or pharmacist if you experience any other side effects.
- **Medical and dental procedures** – Tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking a NOAC well before any planned procedure (including operations in hospital, minor procedures at the doctor’s surgery and any dental procedures. Your NOAC therapy will be considered during the planning of your operation/ procedure. **Do not stop taking your NOAC unless told by your doctor.**