

# Rivaroxaban (Xarelto) for the treatment of deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism

## Information for patients

This leaflet provides further information on rivaroxaban, which you have been prescribed. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

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### What is rivaroxaban and what is it used for?

- Rivaroxaban is an anticoagulant medicine
- Anticoagulants reduce the risk of blood clots developing and prevent extension of an existing blood clot

### Why have I been prescribed rivaroxaban?

As you have been diagnosed with a deep vein thrombosis (clot in the veins of your leg(s)) or a pulmonary embolism (clot in the blood vessels of the lungs), the rivaroxaban is used to reduce the chances of further or new clot development.




### Benefits of rivaroxaban?

It cuts your risk of developing deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism again, and the complications associated with either of these conditions.

### How do I take rivaroxaban?

- Rivaroxaban is best taken at the same time each day
- Rivaroxaban tablets are best taken with food
- There are no restrictions on food that can be eaten whilst taking rivaroxaban.

If you have been newly diagnosed with a blood clot then at first you need to take **15mg twice a day** about 12 hours apart with food. Take each dose at the same times each day for **three** weeks. After this you take **20mg once a day**, with food.

<p><b><u>At first</u></b></p> <p><b>Morning:</b></p>  <p><b>Evening:</b></p>  <p>15 mg <b>twice a day</b> for <b>three weeks</b></p>	<p><b><u>Then</u></b> 20mg <b>once a day</b></p> 
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- It is very important that you take your rivaroxaban as advised. Missing doses may increase the chance of the clot growing or new clots forming
- During the **first three weeks**, when you are taking 15mg twice a day, if you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. For example, you can take two 15mg tablets at the same time on one day if you need to. The next day, you should go back to taking one **15mg tablet twice a day**
- When you are taking **20mg tablet daily**, if you do miss a dose of rivaroxaban, you should take it as soon as you can and then continue the following day as per usual. However, you should not double your dose to make up for a missed dose

### How long do I need to take rivaroxaban for?

Some patients need to take it for between 3 to 6 months and then it's safe for them to stop.

Some patients need to take rivaroxaban long-term.

The doctor looking after you will decide on exactly how long you need to take rivaroxaban for.

### What happens if I need to take rivaroxaban long-term?

After a minimum of 6 months treatment with rivaroxaban, if the doctor thinks it's best for you to stay on rivaroxaban long-term, then the doctor will decide what dose of rivaroxaban is most suitable for you, depending on your individual level of risk of the clot coming back. The dose of rivaroxaban at this point can vary from 10mg, 15mg or 20mg once a day.

Your doctor will tell you which is the best dose for you.

### What are the risks?

Rivaroxaban causes side effects such as dizziness and headaches in between 1 and 10 users in every 100. If you have either of these symptoms, please tell your haematology doctor, nurse or pharmacist. They may prescribe you an alternative anticoagulant.

If you feel dizzy or have headaches do **not** drive or use machinery.

Bleeding is a possible side effect of taking **any** anticoagulant and occasionally it can be serious. Serious bleeding affects 1 to 3 people out of 100.

You should 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 these with you in more detail.

### **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 rivaroxaban?**

You will need to have a blood test before starting rivaroxaban and at least once a year thereafter (if you remain on rivaroxaban long-term). Occasionally, specialist blood tests may be required on your doctor's advice.

### **Can I take other medicines with rivaroxaban?**

It is important to let the doctor or pharmacist who prescribes rivaroxaban know all the other medicines you are currently taking. This includes any medicines you buy over the counter, because they might interfere with rivaroxaban and affect how it works.

If you start a new medicine, please tell the doctor that you are taking rivaroxaban.

If you are unsure about whether you can take a particular medicine with rivaroxaban, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for advice.

### **What else do I need to know when taking rivaroxaban?**

- 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 rivaroxaban 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 rivaroxaban. You may need to stop taking it for a short period of 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 rivaroxaban?**

Please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or anticoagulation clinic for more information.

You can also call King's College Hospital anticoagulation clinics:

Tel: 020 3299 5553     King's College Hospital  
Tel: 01689 864263     Princess Royal University Hospital

### **How do I find out more about deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism?**

Please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or anticoagulation clinic for more information.

You can also visit the Thrombosis UK website for further information:

## **Sharing your information**

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

## **Care provided by students**

King's is a teaching hospital where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

## **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.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS:

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: [kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net)

You can also contact us by using our online form at **[www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)**

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND.

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: [kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net)

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.**