

Cardiac services

Dual Antiplatelet Medication (DAPT)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

This leaflet is for all patients taking dual antiplatelet medication. It has information about how to take this medication safely and how you will be monitored whilst you are taking this medication.

As with all medicines, you should make sure that you read the manufacturer's patient information leaflet (PIL) that comes with the medication, as well as this leaflet before you start taking your dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT).

What is DAPT and what is it used for?

Dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT) is commonly started after placement of stent(s) in your coronary arteries, after coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG) or heart valve surgery. These DAPT medications prevent your blood from clotting too easily and reduce the risk of your blood vessels becoming blocked. You will usually be prescribed two antiplatelet medications. DAPT medications include: Aspirin, Clopidogrel, Prasugrel and Ticagrelor.

Aspirin

Aspirin helps to prevent the blood from clotting. It does this by reducing the 'stickiness' of platelets, which are the small blood cells that can clump together to form a clot. The dose is 75mg daily (smaller than the dose needed to relieve a headache). You will usually need to take aspirin for the rest of your life after your procedure.

Clopidogrel

Clopidogrel is an antiplatelet medicine used together with aspirin after your cardiac procedure. If you are unable to take aspirin you might be prescribed clopidogrel instead.

Prasugrel

Prasugrel is a platelet inhibitor. This means it stops platelets clumping together and forming a blood clot.

Ticagrelor

Ticagrelor is a platelet inhibitor. This means it stops platelets clumping together and forming a blood clot.

What are the side effects?

Antiplatelet medicines can cause stomach aches, nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting (being sick) and can make you bruise more easily. More seriously they can irritate your stomach which can lead to bleeding. To limit this side effect you may be prescribed a medication to reduce the acid in your stomach e.g. Lansoprazole.

When you are taking DAPT medication, minor bleeding (such as small cuts) may take longer than usual to stop. If you are bleeding and if it does not seem like it is going to stop you should go to an A&E department.

Aspirin and Ticagrelor can cause breathlessness. If this lasts for more than a few weeks or gets worse you should tell your doctor.

Duration of treatment

How long you take antiplatelet therapy for can vary depending on the indication for treatment. We will tell you whether your medication is to be taken for the rest of your life or for a specific amount of time. **Do not stop your DAPT medication without contacting your specialist or GP.**

Missed doses

If you miss a dose then take your tablets as soon as you remember. If you remember this less than six hours before your next dose then you should skip the missed dose. Do not take a double dose on the same day to make up for a forgotten dose.

Other medications

Some medications may interact with DAPT so make sure you tell your clinician that you have been started on dual antiplatelet therapy, especially if they are prescribing something new. Before buying any over the counter or herbal medications, check with the pharmacist that it is safe for you to take them.

Dentist and other procedures

It is important that you tell your dentist or other healthcare professionals that you have started taking dual antiplatelet therapy. This is because DAPT medications can mean minor bleeding takes longer to stop and also because DAPT medications can affect how other medications work.

Monitoring before and during treatment

Before and during your treatment, your specialist and your GP may ask you to have some blood tests to make sure that your liver and kidneys are working well.

Alcohol

Do not drink more than 14 units of alcohol in a week.

- Standard pint of beer = 2 units
- Small glass of wine = 1 unit
- Single measure of spirits= 1 unit

Pregnancy

If you are of childbearing age, you should tell your specialist or GP immediately if you become pregnant or want to become pregnant.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

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