

Stopping your Antiplatelet or Anticoagulant prior to your Bowel Cancer Screening Colonoscopy or Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

Endoscopy

Introduction

This leaflet explains what to do if you are on an antiplatelet or anticoagulation medication (blood thinners) prior to your procedure.

The purpose of this leaflet

A plan for your blood thinning medication will be written for you in advance so that you have clear instructions of what to do before you attend hospital on the day of the procedure. A plan will also be made for you after your procedure but will be reviewed by your medical team before you go home. You may require an injection into the skin whilst not taking your blood thinning medication. It is important that your blood thinning medication is only stopped when you are instructed to do so.

It is also important that if you take warfarin, you inform your blood thinning clinic of the upcoming plan.

What are blood thinners and what is the purpose of these drugs?

Blood thinners perform a vital role for treatment and prevention of medical conditions such as heart disease, stroke and blood clots. Examples of oral anticoagulants include warfarin, acenocoumarol, apixaban, rivaroxaban, edoxaban and dabigatran. Examples of antiplatelets include, clopidogrel, prasugrel, ticagrelor. Examples of injectable anticoagulants include enoxaparin (clexane), dalteparin, heparin and fondaparinux. These are given into the skin (subcutaneous).

What is the benefit of stopping my blood thinning medication?

Colonoscopy or Flexible Sigmoidoscopy have a bleeding risk and so blood thinners may need to be stopped for a short period, prior to the procedure, to ensure the procedure can be carried out safely and provide treatment such as a removal of polyps.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

What are the risks of stopping my blood thinning medication?

Taking blood thinners increases the risk of bleeding.

For the period of time when your blood thinner is stopped, your risk of developing a blood clot is increased. This has to be carefully balanced with your bleeding risk associated with the colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy. Your blood thinning management plan will be individualised for you.

What are the alternatives to stopping blood thinning medication?

The alternative to stopping your blood thinning medication is to have a diagnostic only examination. This will allow the procedure to take place but not allow any treatment to take place, such as removal of polyps or biopsies.

Carrying out a diagnostic procedure can still confirm or exclude the presence of bowel cancer.

Before the procedure

You will be given written and verbal advice according to the drug you are taking.

A member of the bowel cancer screening team will contact you on the day prior to the day you are due to stop your blood thinning medication, this will also give you another opportunity to ask any questions you are unsure of.

Day of the procedure

A nurse will invite you into an assessment room to ask you questions about what arrangements you have been given for your blood thinning medication. You will have the chance, again, to ask any questions about what you are unsure of.

You will have the chance, again, to ask any questions if there is anything you are unsure about.

After the procedure

You will be given written and verbal advice on when to restart your blood thinning medication, according to the drug you are taking.

This is to ensure your safety to reduce the risk of developing a blood clot or bleeding after your procedure.

What should I do if my procedure is postponed or cancelled?

If your colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy is postponed or cancelled, you will be contacted by a member of the bowel cancer screening team with advice about restarting your medication. It is important that your blood thinning medication is restarted as soon as possible unless you have been instructed otherwise.

Useful contact number

If you require any further information please contact us:

Bowel Cancer Screening Office

01902 695193

Monday to Friday 8.30am until 4.30pm

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。