

Patient Education

Interventional Cardiac Recovery Unit



Anti-Platelet Medicines

Clopidogrel and prasugrel

This handout explains why you may be prescribed the medicine clopidogrel or prasugrel after your *percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI)*. In this procedure, a **stent** was placed in a blood vessel in your heart to keep the vessel open and improve blood flow.

Clopidogrel and prasugrel will help keep your stent open by keeping blood clots from forming.

This handout also includes precautions and when to call the doctor or nurse.

What are clopidogrel and prasugrel?

These medicines are *platelet inhibitors* (also called anti-platelet agents). They are similar to aspirin. They work by keeping platelets in your blood from clumping together (*clotting*) in the inner lining of your blood vessels, in your heart, and in other areas of your body.

The brand name of clopidogrel is Plavix. The brand name of prasugrel is Effient.

Clopidogrel and prasugrel prevent blood clots. This will help keep your stent open. In patients who have had *percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI)* or have had a heart attack, clopidogrel and prasugrel have been shown to reduce future heart attacks.

These medicines are not advised for patients who are allergic to them or have active bleeding conditions. Two of these conditions are bleeding in the brain or bleeding in the digestive system (also called the *gastrointestinal*, or GI, tract).

Your health care provider may instruct you to take aspirin along with clopidogrel or prasugrel.

How to Use Clopidogrel or Prasugrel

- You were prescribed:
 - Clopidogrel
 - Prasugrel
- Take _____mg daily by mouth for _____ (month/s).
- If you forget to take a dose at your usual time, take it as soon as you remember that day.
- Resume all your other medicines as instructed.

Precautions

- While you are taking clopidogrel or prasugrel, any kind of bleeding you have will take longer to stop. Try to avoid rough sports or activities where you could injure yourself.

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Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

For procedure questions, call the Interventional Cardiac Recovery Unit at 206-598-7146 weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the Procedural Cardiology Fellow on call to be paged.

- You may also have bleeding from nosebleeds, or you may have blood in your urine or stool. Call the health care provider who prescribed your clopidogrel or prasugrel if this happens.
- Tell any dentist or other health care providers who treat you that you are taking clopidogrel or prasugrel.
- Keep taking clopidogrel or prasugrel until your cardiologist or the health care provider who prescribed it for you tells you to stop. Do **not** just stop taking it.
- Caution is advised in certain situations. Tell your health care provider if you:
 - Know you are allergic to clopidogrel or prasugrel
 - Are pregnant
 - Are breastfeeding
 - Have kidney or liver problems
 - Have a bleeding condition (see page 1)

When to Call Your Doctor or Nurse

Call your health care provider who prescribed clopidogrel or prasugrel if you have any of these symptoms:

- Skin rash
- Allergic reaction such as itching or swelling in your hands, face, or throat
- Trouble breathing
- Blood in your stool (stool will look black or tarry)
- Fever, chills, or sore throat
- Swelling in your ankles, hands, or feet
- Red or dark brown urine
- Sudden weight gain
- Chest pain that is not related to your disease
- Severe pain in your stomach

Also, tell your health care provider if you lose your health insurance. Financial help may be available to cover the cost of clopidogrel or prasugrel.



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