

Preventing Blood Clots with Enoxaparin (Lovenox)

Anticoagulation treatment during or after pregnancy

This handout gives information about using enoxaparin (Lovenox), a medicine that is used to prevent blood clots.

About Enoxaparin (Lovenox)

Enoxaparin (brand name Lovenox) is an *anticoagulant* medicine. “Anti” means “against” and “coagulant” refers to blood clotting. An anticoagulant helps keep clots from forming in the blood.

Although enoxaparin is sometimes called a “blood-thinner,” it does not thin your blood. Instead, it keeps natural blood components called *clotting factors* from working as usual.

If your health care provider has prescribed enoxaparin treatment for you, you must inject yourself with the medicine _____ times every day during your pregnancy. Your nurse will teach you how to give yourself enoxaparin injections.

These injections should be given in your abdomen, not your arms or thighs. The injections will **not** go near your uterus or baby. Your pharmacist, doctor, or nurse will review the medicine with you to make sure you will be OK giving yourself the injections at home.

Side Effects

The main side effects of enoxaparin are bruising and bleeding.

Bruising

Bruising can occur at the injection sites, or elsewhere on your body. While on enoxaparin, you may notice that bruises are larger than expected, take longer to go away, and may have a knot in the middle. If you have bruising and it is getting worse, call your health care provider.



Talk with your health care provider if you have any questions or concerns about side effects with enoxaparin.

Minor Bleeding

You might see any of these symptoms from time to time while you are taking enoxaparin:

- Gum bleeding while brushing your teeth
- Nosebleed
- Easy bruising
- More bleeding after minor cuts
- Longer menstrual bleeding

If you have minor bleeding, and it is getting worse or can't be controlled, call your health care provider.

Blood Clots

You may get a blood clot even though you are taking enoxaparin.

Symptoms of a blood clot in the arm or leg are:

- Changes in your arm or leg:
 - Increased swelling
 - Pain
 - Tenderness
 - Redness or discoloration
- Shortness of breath

If you have any of these symptoms, be sure to speak with your doctor or a nurse:

- Call your doctor at _____ .
- Or, call Labor and Delivery at _____ .

Pulmonary Embolism

A *pulmonary embolism* is a blood clot that travels to your lungs from another part of your body. Symptoms of a pulmonary embolism are:

- Chest pain
- Rapid heartbeat
- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Fever

When to Call the Doctor

IMPORTANT: If you have the symptoms of a pulmonary embolism listed on page 2, **call 9-1-1 right away**. Tell them that you are on a blood thinner.

Otherwise, call your doctor if you:

- Fall or hit your head
- Cough up, spit up, or throw up blood
- Have blood in your urine (urine is pink-colored)
- Have blood in your stool (stool is bright red, dark, or tarry)
- Have unusual bruising or are bleeding and you do not know why
- Are bleeding from your nose and cannot make it stop
- Are bleeding where you injected enoxaparin
- Have a fever higher than 100.5°F (38°C)
- Have shaking and chills
- Have nausea and/or vomiting
- Have questions or concerns that cannot wait until your follow-up visit

If you have had surgery, also call your doctor if you:

- Have bleeding or drainage that soaks your dressing
- Have any sign of infection in your incision:
 - Redness
 - Increasing pain
 - Swelling
 - Foul-smelling drainage
 - Change in the type or an increase in the amount of drainage

Follow-up Visits and Blood Tests

You will have a follow-up visit in the clinic on _____ .

Before you come for this visit, your doctor may need you to have a blood test to make sure your platelet blood count and *Anti Xa values* (a measure of how much of the medicine is in your body) are in the right range.

To have this blood test done:

- Talk with your doctor about getting lab slips for the blood test.
- Go to the laboratory at _____ .

Safe Disposal of “Sharps” (Needles and Syringes)

- **Important:** Do **NOT** flush needles or syringes down the toilet.
- Safely place all used syringes in a “sharps container” or other plastic container, such as an empty juice bottle. You can buy a sharps container at a pharmacy. **Leave the needles attached.**
- Store your sharps container out of reach of children and pets.
- Ask your pharmacist if you can bring the filled sharps container back to the pharmacy for drop-off. If you can, drop off your full container there.
- You can also drop off your full container at a public health center. Ask the receptionist at the center for help. For a list of public health centers in King County, please visit www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/locations.aspx.
- Or, you can safely dispose of your full sharps container 24 hours a day in drop boxes outside some public health clinics. Check with your local public health department or fire department for drop-box locations.
- **It is illegal to dispose of used needles (sharps) or syringes in your regular garbage can or recycling containers.** If your trash collector finds needles or syringes in your trash, they will not pick up your trash.
- **Do not break off the needles (points).** They can carry HIV, hepatitis, and other germs. If the point gets broken off:
 - Pull the plunger out of the barrel.
 - Carefully place the needle in the barrel.
 - Replace the plunger.
- To learn more about safe and legal disposal of sharps, please visit www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/hiv/resources/disposal.aspx.

Helpful Phone Numbers

- Maternal and Infant Care Clinic (Seattle)206-598-4070
- Maternal Fetal Medicine Clinic (Yakima).....206-598-3900
or 855-464-6298 (toll-free)
- UW Labor and Delivery 206-598-4616

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Maternal and Infant Care Clinic: 206-598-4070