

Aspirin and Clopidogrel

After your heart valve procedure

This handout is for patients at the Heart Institute at UW Medical Center. It explains aspirin and clopidogrel. You will take these drugs to help prevent blood clots after your transcatheter valve replacement or repair (TAVR, TMVR, TTVR, or MitraClip).

Why do I need these medicines?

It is very important to prevent blood clots after your procedure. Both aspirin and clopidogrel (Plavix) are *antiplatelet* medicines. “Anti” means against, and “platelets” are blood cells that help clotting. Antiplatelet drugs help keep clots from forming in your blood and around your heart valves.

Take these medicines as prescribed until your doctor tells you to stop taking them.

How do I take aspirin?

Aspirin tablets come in 2 dose sizes: 81 mg (low-dose or “baby” aspirin) and 325 mg.

- Every day, you will take one 81 mg tablet.
- You can take your aspirin with or without food.
- You can buy aspirin at your local drugstore. You do not need a prescription. Some brand names are Bayer, Ecotrin, and St. Joseph. There are also generic brands.

Read the label carefully to make sure it says 81 mg tablets.

- Some patients may have stomach problems (indigestion) when they take aspirin. If this occurs, try taking your aspirin with food. Or, try enteric-coated tablets.
- If needed, you may crush your regular aspirin tablets. Do **not** crush tablets that are *enteric-coated* (see label).



Take all medicines exactly as prescribed.

How do I take clopidogrel?

Clopidogrel comes in 75 mg tablets.

- Every day, you will take one 75 mg tablet.
- You can take clopidogrel with or without food.
- If needed, you may crush your clopidogrel tablets.

What do I need to know about taking aspirin and clopidogrel at the same time?

You may have very minor bleeding. It is normal to have these symptoms from time to time:

- Gums bleeding when you brush your teeth
- Nose bleeds
- Easy bruising
- More bleeding than normal from small cuts

When should I call my doctor?

- Call your doctor if you:
 - Get sick and cannot take your medicines
 - Fall and hit your head
- The symptoms listed below may be signs of more serious bleeding. Call your doctor or come to the emergency room **right away** if you have:
 - Red or dark brown urine
 - Red or black, tarry stool
 - Vomiting or coughing up blood (it may look like coffee grounds)
 - Severe headache or stomachache
 - Bruises that appear for no reason
 - Any bleeding that does not stop or is very heavy

Can I take other medicines while taking aspirin and clopidogrel?

Risk of Bleeding

Your risk of bleeding can increase if you take certain other medicines while you are taking aspirin and clopidogrel. Do **NOT** take any of the medicines listed below without first checking with your doctor:

- Other aspirin products, such as Excedrin, Alka-Seltzer, Nyquil, and Pepto-Bismol

- *Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs* (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, and others), celecoxib (Celebrex), diclofenac (Cataflam, Voltaren), indomethacin (Indocin), meloxicam (Mobic), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn, and others), and others
- Warfarin (Coumadin), dabigatran (Pradaxa), apixaban (Eliquis), rivaroxaban (Xarelto), and edoxaban (Savaysa)

Lower Effectiveness

Certain drugs that treat and prevent heartburn can affect how well clopidogrel works. Do **NOT** take any of the medicines listed below without first checking with your doctor:

- Omeprazole (Prilosec), esomeprazole (Nexium), and omeprazole-sodium bicarbonate (Zegerid)

What else do I need to know while I am taking aspirin and clopidogrel?

- You do not need to be monitored while taking these medicines.
- You can eat all types of foods. There are no eating restrictions.
- Tell **all** of your healthcare providers, including dental workers, that you are taking aspirin and clopidogrel.
- You may need to stop taking aspirin and clopidogrel before you have medical or dental procedures. Do **NOT** stop taking these medicines unless your doctor tells you to.
- Avoid alcohol while taking these medicines, as it may increase your risk of bleeding. If you do drink alcohol:
 - Do **not** have more than 1 drink a day
 - Do **not** have more than 2 drinks at a time every now and then (1 drink = 1 beer OR 1 glass of wine OR 1 cocktail OR 1 shot)

Questions?

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

Heart Institute at UW Medical Center: Call 206.598.VALV (206.598.8258) weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

After hours or on weekends or holidays: Call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the CARD I provider on call.