

Anti-Platelet Medicines

What they do, how to take them, and precautions

This handout explains why you may be prescribed clopidogrel, prasugrel, or ticagrelor after your percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI). It includes precautions and when to call the doctor or nurse.

What are anti-platelet medicines?

These medicines are *platelet inhibitors*. They work like aspirin. They keep 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. Anti-platelet medicines are also called blood thinners.

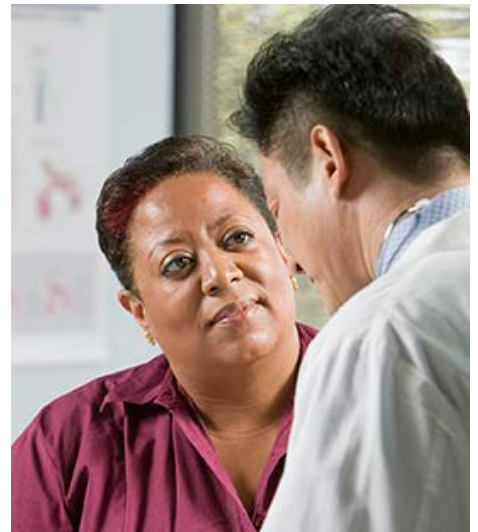
Anti-platelet medicines help prevent blood clots. They will help keep your stent open. In patients who have had *percutaneous coronary intervention* (PCI) or have had a heart attack, these medicines have reduced future heart attacks.

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

Your provider may instruct you to take aspirin along with this medicine.

How to Take Your Medicine

- You were prescribed:
 - Clopidogrel (Plavix)
 - Prasugrel (Effient)
 - Ticagrelor (Brilinta)
- Take _____ mg a day 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.



Talk with your provider if you have any questions about taking your medicine.

Precautions

- While you are taking this medicine, bleeding will take longer to stop. Try to avoid rough sports or activities where you could injure yourself.
- You may also have nosebleeds, or you may have blood in your urine or stool. Call the provider who prescribed your anti-platelet medicine if this happens.
- Tell your dentist and other providers who treat you that you are taking anti-platelet medicines.
- Keep taking your anti-platelet medicine until your cardiologist or the healthcare provider who prescribed it for you tells you to stop. Do **not** just stop taking it.
- Caution is advised in certain situations. Tell your provider if you:
 - Know you are allergic to your anti-platelet medicine
 - Are pregnant
 - Are breastfeeding
 - Have kidney or liver problems
 - Have a bleeding condition (see page 1)

When to Call

Call your provider who prescribed your anti-platelet medicine 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 provider if you do not have health insurance or if you lose your coverage. You may be eligible for financial aid to cover the cost of your anti-platelet medicine.

Questions?

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

For questions about your procedure, call Cardiac Procedures weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.:
206.598.4300

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Procedural Cardiology Fellow on call.