

Patient information

Rivaroxaban

Rivaroxaban is a type of medicine known as an anticoagulant. It makes your blood flow through your veins more easily. This means your blood will be less likely to make a dangerous blood clot.

Key facts

- You'll usually take rivaroxaban once or twice a day, with or after food.
- The most common side effect of rivaroxaban is bleeding more easily than normal, such as having nosebleeds, heavier periods, bleeding gums and bruising.
- Your doctor or pharmacist will give you an anticoagulant alert card. Always carry this with you. Show it to your doctor or dentist before you have surgery or dental treatment. It's important they know you're taking rivaroxaban, as it may put you at risk of bleeding.
- You can drink alcohol while taking rivaroxaban. But heavy drinking, especially binge drinking, can make you more likely to bleed.

How to take it

- You'll usually take rivaroxaban once a day just after a meal or snack. It's important to take it with some food to help your body absorb the whole dose.
- Try to take it at the same time every day.
- If you're taking rivaroxaban to treat DVT or a pulmonary embolism you may need to take it twice a day for the first few weeks. Your doctor will tell you if you need to do this.

How long to take it for

- How long you need to take rivaroxaban will depend on why you're taking it.
- If you are taking rivaroxaban for a blood clot – Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) you will need to take this for between 3-6 months. If you have had a previous DVT

or a Pulmonary embolism (PE) it will be recommended that you take rivaroxaban for the rest of your life to help prevent further blood clots.

- If you are advised to continue rivaroxaban for the rest of your life you will need a review with your GP at least once a year, this is to check the risks for bleeding against the risks for another DVT/PE. The review should also check for interactions with medications and include blood tests.

Forgotten doses

- If you forget to take it- **midnight** is the cut off point for forgotten doses.
- If you forget a dose of rivaroxaban, take it as soon as you remember if you are taking 1 tablet twice a day. Take the first dose as soon as you remember and then take your next dose at your usual time.
- If you are taking 1 tablet a day, take it as soon as you remember if it is before midnight, if it is after midnight skip the missed dose and take your next dose as planned.

Do not take two doses to make up for a missed dose.

It is important that you remember to take rivaroxaban every day.

If you take too much

- Taking too much rivaroxaban puts you at risk of bleeding.
- Call 111 or go to your nearest Emergency Department but do not drive yourself. Your clotting tests will need to be checked.

Other medications and Rivaroxaban

Some medications can affect how rivaroxaban works. This can lead to serious side effects, including increased risk of bleeding or reduced effectiveness of your medications including rivaroxaban.

Important interactions include:

- Other anticoagulants such as warfarin
- Anti-fungal or antibiotics such as fluconazole, erythromycin, rifampicin, and clarithromycin
- Epileptic medication such as carbamazepine, phenytoin, or phenobarbital.
- Non-steroidal medications such as ibuprofen, naproxen, and aspirin
- There are interactions with herbal medications such as St Johns' wort, glucosamine and those that contain fish oils such as cod liver oil.

We advise that if you want to take supplements/herbal remedies that you take the alert card with you and discuss with a pharmacist. Always check with your Dr if you have any medications changed.

What if I am unable to take the Rivaroxaban.

- If you develop a vomiting bug and are unable to absorb the Rivaroxaban due to vomiting or diarrhoea, then please inform your GP and they will arrange for the anticoagulation to be switched to an injectable form of anticoagulation.

Side effects

Less serious bleeding

It's usual to bleed more easily than normal while you're taking rivaroxaban.

The kind of bleeding you might have includes:

- periods that are heavier and last longer than usual
- bleeding for a little longer than usual if you cut yourself.
- occasional nosebleeds (that last for less than 10 minutes)
- bleeding from your gums when you brush your teeth.
- bruises that come up more easily and take longer to fade than usual.

This type of bleeding is not dangerous and should stop by itself.

If it happens, keep taking the rivaroxaban, but tell your doctor if the bleeding bothers you or does not stop.

More serious bleeding

- If you have red urine, black stool, passing fresh blood from anywhere or are vomiting fresh blood or what looks like coffee grounds.
- Have any cuts or nosebleeds that will not resolve with simple first aid measures.
- Sudden onset of a severe headache, loss of vision, numbness to your arms or legs or you bang your head you must come to the Emergency Department – preferably by calling 999.

If you feel that you are having a reaction to the medication such as swelling to the lips or throat, rapid breathing /unable to breathe properly, if you become pale or drowsy and develop a rash– do not take any further Rivaroxaban and call 999.

If you have any significant knocks to the head – attend the Emergency Department for consideration of CT head scan.

If discover that you are pregnant or plan to get pregnant while you are on Rivaroxaban, please inform your GP immediately as your treatment will have to be changed. Rivaroxaban is not licensed for use in pregnancy or if you are breastfeeding.

Visit www.nhs.uk/medicines/rivaroxaban if there is anything else you require to know about this medication. This is just a brief out-line of some of the most important information about Rivaroxaban.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk>



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