

Anti-coagulation and anti-platelet medications in endoscopy

If you are taking blood thinning tablets, your medication may have to be held for a number of days around the time of your endoscopy.

Your doctor will advise you about which medications to stop beforehand.

Each person should have a specific recommendation for them, but there is some general guidance below.

Aspirin

If you are taking aspirin:

- You can continue for almost all GI endoscopic procedures.
- No increased risk of haemorrhage (bleeding) in patients who have had a biopsy taken if they are taking aspirin.

Direct oral anticoagulants (DOAC): eg apixaban, rivaroxaban, edoxaban

- Generally, if you are having a gastroscopy, you should not take your morning dose.
- For most other procedures, you should take your last dose 3 days before your procedure.
- Your doctor will advise you when to restart your medication after your procedure.

Warfarin

If you are taking warfarin:

- Generally, for low-risk procedures, once your INR level is in the appropriate range, Warfarin can be continued.
- For high-risk procedures, warfarin should be stopped 5 days before the procedure and your INR level should be less than 1.5 before the procedure. You should restart your warfarin in the night after you have had your procedure.
- Some patients are at a much higher risk of a clot when stopping their warfarin and you will be advised whether you should take an injection to reduce this risk (i.e. Clexane or Innohep) around the time of your procedure. You should take your last dose of Clexane or Innohep 24 hours before your procedure. You may be required to take this for a number of days after your procedure also.

- Here are some examples of “high risk patients” – patients with: a) metallic heart valve, b) prosthetic heart valve PLUS atrial fibrillation; c) atrial fibrillation PLUS mitral stenosis, d) if it has been less than 3 months after a clotting episode, e) previous clot whilst on warfarin, f)atrial fibrillation PLUS previous stroke/TIA within 3 months; g) atrial fibrillation PLUS previous stroke/TIA with 3 or more of: heart failure, high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus and being older than 75 years of age.

Other antiplatelet drugs

If you are taking clopidogrel/prasugrel/ticagrelor:

- You can continue if undergoing a gastroscopy.
- For most other procedures, you should stop 7 days before your endoscopy.
- Guidance on restarting will be given to you by your doctor and put in the endoscopy report. This is usually 1-2 days after the procedure.
- If you have had recent stents placed in your heart (coronary artery stents) then we may need to discuss with your cardiologist about your medication and timing of the procedure.