



University Hospitals Bristol **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Patient information service
Bristol Heart Institute
Adult congenital heart disease

Clopidogrel



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What is clopidogrel for?

In your blood, there are 'sticky' cells called platelets. When you cut yourself, the platelets stick to each other (clot) to seal the wound. Sometimes a clot may form in a blood vessel and block it, causing a stroke or heart attack.

Clopidogrel (pronounced 'clo-pea-dough-grill') reduces the stickiness of platelets. It will help to protect you from blood clots forming in your arteries, which will reduce the risk of you having a heart attack or stroke.

If you have had your patent foramen ovale (PFO) or atrial septal defect (ASD) closed, you may be started on clopidogrel and low-dose aspirin for three to six months to ensure no blood clots form around the new device. (See also the aspirin patient information leaflet).

Before taking clopidogrel, it is important that your GP knows:

- **if you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding. It is advisable to NOT get pregnant on clopidogrel**
- if you have recently had any surgery
- if you have a condition which causes bleeding, such as a stomach ulcer
- if you have liver or kidney problems
- if you have ever had an allergic reaction to this or to any other medicine
- if you are taking any other medicines, including those available to buy without a prescription, herbal and complementary medicines.

How are they to be taken?

Take clopidogrel exactly as your doctor has told you. The usual dose is one 75mg tablet each day.

You may take clopidogrel at whatever time of day you find easiest to remember, but try to take your doses at the same time each day. Most people prefer to take it in the morning, as they find this helps them to remember to take it.

You can take the tablets before, during, or after your meals.

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until the following day, skip the missed dose.

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

Are there any side effects?

Side effects can include: bruising, nosebleeds, bleeding, bleeding under the skin (blood blisters), indigestion, abdominal pain, and diarrhoea.

What can I do if I experience this?

Because of the way clopidogrel works, any bleeding may take longer than normal to stop. If this becomes troublesome, let your doctor know.

Stick to simple meals – avoid any rich or spicy foods. Drink plenty of water to replace any lost fluids.

Important

If you experience the following very rare but serious symptoms, contact your doctor for advice straightaway:

- a high temperature
- bruising under the skin, like red pinpoint dots
- feeling confused or extremely tired
- jaundice (yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes).

You may wish to write down any questions you have for your cardiologist or GP:

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Specialist nurse contact information:

Sheena Vernon

Adult congenital heart specialist nurse

Email: Sheena.Vernon@UHBristol.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0117 342 6599

Wendy Visser

Adult congenital heart specialist nurse

Email: Wendy.Visser@UHBristol.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0117 342 6600

Bethan Shiers

Adult congenital heart specialist nurse

Email: Bethan.Shiers@UHBristol.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0117 342 6657

Website for more information

<http://www.patient.co.uk/medicine/clopidogrel.htm>

Please note that if for any reason you would value a second opinion concerning your diagnosis or treatment, you are entirely within your rights to request this.

The first step would usually be to discuss this with the doctor or other lead clinician who is responsible for your care.

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death. For support in stopping smoking contact **Smokefree Bristol** on **0117 922 2255**.

As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit:
www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation
or call the research and innovation team on
0117 342 0233.

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/

Hospital switchboard: 0117 923 0000



Minicom: 0117 934 9869



www.uhbristol.nhs.uk



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.



For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please call the patient information service:



0117 342 3728 / 3725

