



PRADAXA IS AN IMPORTANT NEW MEDICINE

John A. Schmidt, MD

Doctors often prescribe “blood thinners” to prevent clots. There are two classes of blood thinners. The first makes platelets less “sticky.” The best known is aspirin. A daily low dose or “baby” aspirin is sufficient. The second class interferes with the clotting proteins in our blood. Heparin, which requires injection, is one of the best known. Many patients who first take heparin are converted to an oral medicine called Coumadin (aka Warfarin). Patients who take Coumadin must have their blood checked on a regular basis. Some patients have to frequently adjust their dose up or down to make sure they do not clot (too little) or bleed (too much).

Now, after many years of research and many clinical studies, a second oral blood-thinner has been approved by the FDA. It is called Pradaxa (aka Dabigatran). It does not require blood testing in most patients. The reason is that the blood level of Pradaxa is not affected by foods and other drugs in the same way as Coumadin. For the same reason, Pradaxa is safer with less risk of bleeding. The one down side to the medicine is cost. So make sure your drug plan covers it before switching.

***Disclaimer:** There are side effects to most prescription and over-the-counter medicines. These should be discussed with your doctor and/or pharmacist before taking any medication. The information in this article is for sole purpose of making consumers aware of new medicines and/or advances in medical care. Consumers should check with their physician before taking any action.*

About John A. Schmidt, MD

As one of the first physicians to provide patients with a Medical Home in Monmouth County, New Jersey, Dr. Schmidt coordinates care for his patients. He works with their specialists and other healthcare providers to ensure that his patients have everything that they need to stay healthy and well. Dr. Schmidt accomplishes this by managing his patients’ Personal Health Information. Specialists and other providers update Dr. Schmidt on the care they give so that he has a complete picture of what is going on in their Electronic Medical Record. Patients benefit from his proactive approach. The duplication of tests and procedures is minimized, as well as the risk of potentially dangerous drug interactions. He is among the first to provide patients direct Internet access to their Personal Health Information through a secure, password-protected, Patient Portal available on his website. Dr. Schmidt provides information on Medical Homes, Electronic Medical Records and health care on his blog at www.schmidtmd.com.

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