PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Clopidogrel

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

## Brand Names: US

Plavix

## Brand Names: Canada

ACT Clopidogrel [DSC]; AG-Clopidogrel; APO-Clopidogrel; Auro-Clopidogrel; BIO-Clopidogrel; JAMP-Clopidogrel; M-Clopidogrel; Mar-Clopidogrel; MINT-Clopidogrel; NRA-Clopidogrel; Plavix; PMS-Clopidogrel; RIVA-Clopidogrel; SPC-Clopidogrel; TEVA-Clopidogrel

## Warning

- This drug may not work as well in some people. A test can be done to see if your child is one of these people. Talk with the doctor.

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to lower the chance of heart attack or stroke.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Active bleeding or bleeding problems like bleeding in the brain or bleeding ulcers.
- If your child is taking any of these drugs: Esomeprazole, omeprazole, repaglinide, or rifampin.
- If your child is taking any drugs that may raise the chance of bleeding. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your child's doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

## What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists. This drug may need to be stopped before certain types of surgery as the doctor has told you. If this drug is stopped, the doctor will tell you when to start giving this drug again after your child's surgery or procedure.
- Do not stop giving this drug without talking with your child's doctor. Your child may have a greater risk of heart attack or stroke.
- If your child falls, gets hurt, or hits their head, call the doctor right away. Talk with the doctor even if your child feels fine.

- Your child may bleed more easily. Make sure your child is careful and avoids injury. Be sure your child has a soft toothbrush. Rarely, some bleeding problems have been deadly.
- Talk with the doctor before giving your child products that have aspirin, ibuprofen or like products, blood thinners (warfarin, ticlopidine, clopidogrel), garlic, ginseng, ginkgo, or vitamin E.

### If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

## What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- Signs of low blood sugar like dizziness, headache, feeling sleepy, feeling weak, shaking, a fast heartbeat, confusion, hunger, or sweating.
- A severe blood problem called thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (TTP) has happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call your child's doctor right away if your child feels confused, very tired, or very weak, or if your child has weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or

thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or change in eyesight. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has a fast heartbeat; fever; headache; pale skin; less urine passed or urine that is pink or has blood in it; purple spots on the skin or mouth; seizures; severe diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up; shortness of breath; or yellow skin or eyes.

## What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if your child has any side effects that bother your child or do not go away.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

## How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

## What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses unless told to do so by your child's doctor.

## How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

## General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

## Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options,

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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