PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Fondaparinux

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

Arixtra

Brand Names: Canada

Arixtra

Warning

- People who have any type of spinal or epidural procedure are more likely to have bleeding problems around the spine when already on this drug. This bleeding rarely happens, but can lead to not being able to move body (paralysis) long-term or paralysis that will not go away. The risk is raised in people who have problems with their spine, a certain type of epidural catheter, or have had spinal surgery. The risk is also raised in people who take any other drugs that

may affect blood clotting, like blood-thinner drugs (like warfarin), aspirin, or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or naproxen.

- Tell the doctor your child uses this drug before your child has a spinal or epidural procedure. Call the doctor right away if your child has any signs of nerve problems like back pain, numbness or tingling, muscle weakness, paralysis, or loss of bladder or bowel control.
- Talk with the doctor if your child has recently had or will be having a spinal or epidural procedure. Some time may need to pass between the use of this drug and your child's procedure. Talk with your child's doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat or prevent blood clots.

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 weighs less than 110 pounds (50 kilograms).
- If your child has low platelet levels.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Bleeding, a heart infection called endocarditis, or poor kidney function.
- 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.
- If your child will be having surgery, talk to the doctor

about when to start giving this drug again after surgery.

- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- If your child has a latex allergy, talk with the doctor.
- 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.
- 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.
- If you are giving this drug to a child, certain other health problems may raise the chance of bleeding. Talk with the doctor to see if your child has one of these health problems.

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 potassium levels like muscle pain or weakness, muscle cramps, or a heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Feeling confused.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or

thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.

- Severe headache.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Purple spots or redness of the skin.

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 any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Irritation where this drug is given.
- Trouble sleeping.

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.

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin in the belly area.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- 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.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not give into skin within 2 inches (5 cm) of the belly button.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Move the site where you give the shot with each shot.
- If using prefilled syringe, do not get rid of air bubble from syringe before giving.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

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.

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.

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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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