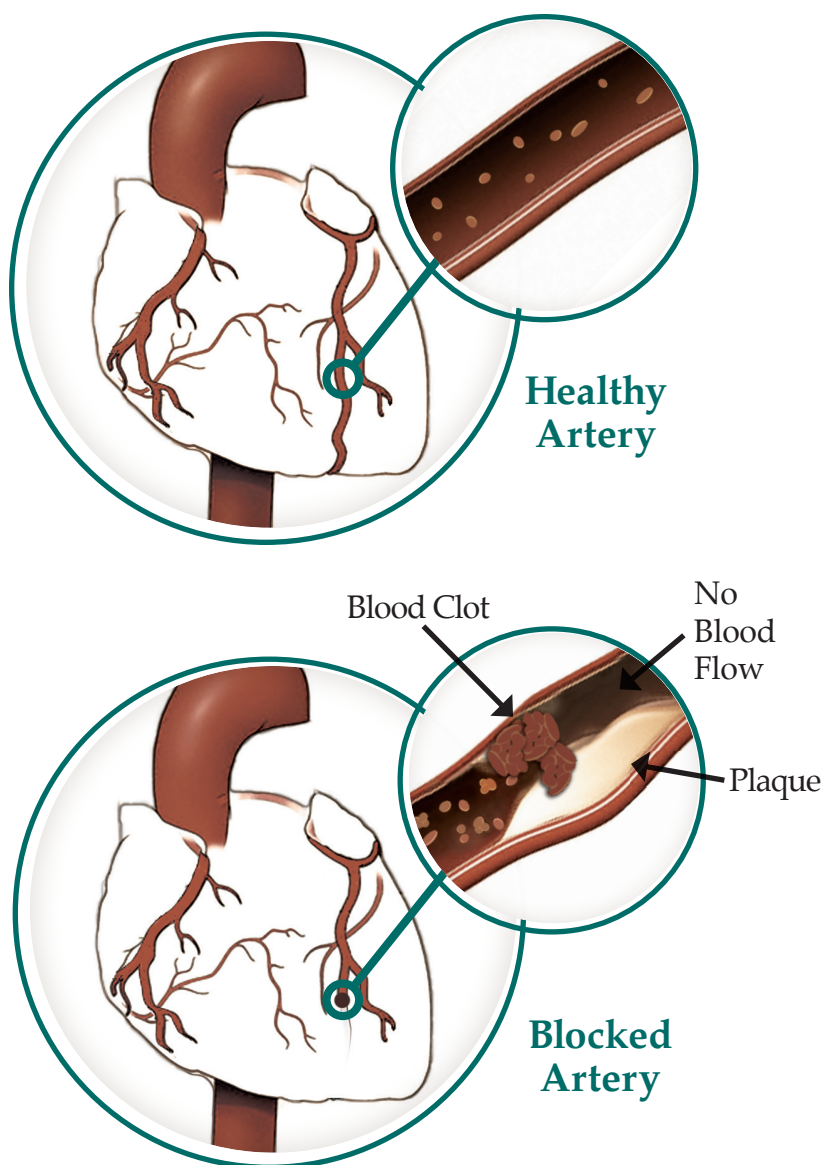


What You Need to Know Antiplatelet Medicines

Platelets are cells in the blood that clump together to make blood clots. Blood clots help wounds heal.

But when you are at risk for heart attack or stroke, blood clots can cause problems. Your platelets can clump together more easily and form a dangerous clot. Antiplatelet medicines help stop these blood clots.



A blood clot can stop blood flow in a partly blocked artery. No blood flow in a heart artery causes a heart attack.

Why should you take antiplatelet medicines?

Antiplatelet medicines stop bad blood clots from forming. Your doctor may prescribe them after you've had:

- a heart attack
- a stroke
- stents put in your heart arteries

Antiplatelet medicines lower your risk for heart attack, stroke or blood clot in a stent.

Some Antiplatelet Medicines

- Aspirin
- Brilinta™ (ticagrelor)
- Effient® (prasugrel)
- Plavix® (clopidogrel)

You may need aspirin and prescription antiplatelet medicine. If your doctor prescribes them, make sure you take both drugs. Some patients (like those who have atrial fibrillation) might need a third medicine that affects blood clotting in other ways.

Get help paying for medicine

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you can't afford your medicines. There are programs that may help you pay.



PCNA
Preventive Cardiovascular
Nurses Association
www.pcna.net

Details About Antiplatelet Medicines

Now That You Are Taking Antiplatelet Medicines

What can you expect?

You may bleed and bruise more. This means the medicine is working. But call your doctor right away if you have unexpected bleeding or:

- Dark or black stool, pink or brown urine, or blood from your vagina (unless it's your period)
- Bad headache
- Throwing up something brown or coffee colored
- Nosebleed that is hard to stop or bleeding gums

You should also call your doctor if you:

- Feel more short of breath
- Feel dizzy, very weak, tired or confused
- Have fever or chills
- Have muscle pain or bad back pain
- Have stomach pain, nausea, diarrhea, or constipation
- Notice your eyes look yellow or your skin looks very pale or yellow
- Notice your blood pressure readings are consistently more than 140/90

If you have any of the symptoms you had with your heart attack, stroke, or when you had a stent put in your heart, call 9-1-1.

Helpful Hints

Accidents happen, like cutting your finger while cooking. If you start bleeding:

- Press on the wound with a clean cloth or gauze for 5 minutes or until bleeding stops.
- Keep band aids close by.

When traveling:

- Bring extra doses of your medicine.
- Never pack your medicines in your checked bags.
- Have a list of your medicines with you. Put everything on the list, even non-prescription medicine, like aspirin or vitamins.

How to Take Your Antiplatelet Medicines

Always ask your doctor or nurse:

1. Before stopping or changing the way you take your antiplatelet medicines.
2. What to do if you miss a dose.
3. How long you need to take these medicines. You may take 2 antiplatelet medicines for a year or more. You may stay on aspirin even longer.
4. Whether you can stop taking your antiplatelet medicines before dental work or surgery. Your dentist or surgeon may want to talk to your heart doctor. Together, they can plan the best care for you.

Remember: Tell your doctors and nurses that you are on antiplatelet medicines. Make sure they know before they prescribe any medicines for you.

Your Antiplatelet Medicines

Name	Dosage	When to Take

Heart Doctor _____ Phone # _____

Nurse _____ Phone # _____