

**Anticoagulation in patients with Atrial Fibrillation**

At Westway Medical Centre, we regularly review your record to ensure that we are offering you the best possible care.

We are aware that you have a diagnosis of atrial fibrillation and that you are currently prescribed warfarin to reduce the risk of stroke.

**What is the alternative to warfarin?**

For decades, warfarin has been the drug of choice in preventing blood clots. But there are other types of anticoagulants, called direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs), which are now widely used.

DOACs have been shown to be as effective at preventing strokes as warfarin. The main difference between DOACs and warfarin is that DOACs are less influenced by diet and other medications.

For more information about DOACs, please see the following link: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/medical/drug-cabinet/doac#:~:text=DOACs%20have%20been%20shown%20to,as%20the%20drug%20is%20taken>.

**DOAC of choice**

The DOAC that we would recommend would be called edoxaban. For more information about this medication, please see the following link: <https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/edoxaban/>

## Do I need to have any tests or be monitored because I am taking a DOAC?

## INR blood testing would no longer be required. Instead, we would arrange regular blood tests to monitor your kidney function, liver function and full blood count. The frequency of these blood tests will vary from patient to patient. As a rough guide, they will be once every 3-12 months.

**Anticoagulant alert card**

Your community pharmacist will give you an anticoagulant alert card (this will be inside the box of edoxaban). Please ensure you carry this with you at all times as it tells healthcare professionals that you are taking an anticoagulant. This can be useful for them to know in case of a medical emergency.

If you need any medical or dental treatment, show your anticoagulant alert card to the nurse, doctor or dentist. This includes before you have vaccinations and routine sessions with the dental hygienist.

Your doctor may advise you to stop taking edoxaban or reduce your dose for a short time.

**Next steps**

**Please advise the surgery which of the following options you would like to choose from:**

1. **I would like to stop warfarin and switch to edoxaban instead. I am happy to provide an up-to-date weight and have a routine blood test.**
2. **I would like to remain on warfarin.**

**You can use the [REPLY] option via the text sent, telephone after 1pm or hand this letter in.**

***\*Please note, if you do not inform us of your decision by 25/3/2024, we will assume that you would like to remain on warfarin.\****

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

Westway Medical Centre