

## **Rivaroxaban to treat deep vein thrombosis and to prevent deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism**

*NICE 'technology appraisal guidance' advises on when and how drugs and other treatments should be used in the NHS.*

This document is about when **rivaroxaban** should be used to treat people with deep vein thrombosis, and prevent pulmonary embolism and further deep vein thrombosis, in the NHS in England and Wales. It explains guidance (advice) from NICE (the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence). It is written for people with deep vein thrombosis but it may also be useful for their families or carers or for anyone with an interest in the condition.

It does not describe deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism or the treatments in detail – a member of your healthcare team should discuss these with you. You can get more information from the organisations listed on page 4.

*This may not be the only possible treatment for deep vein thrombosis. Your healthcare team should talk to you about whether it is suitable for you and about other treatment options available.*

### What has NICE said?

NICE recommends rivaroxaban as a possible treatment for adults with deep vein thrombosis, and to help prevent a pulmonary embolism or another deep vein thrombosis.

### Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work, and also at how well they work in relation to how much they cost the NHS. NICE recommended rivaroxaban because it works better than other treatments available on the NHS. In the short term, it is cheaper than other treatments. For longer-term treatment rivaroxaban costs more than other treatments, but this is justified by the benefits it provides.

## Deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism

When a blood clot forms in one of the deep veins in the leg, thigh, pelvis or arm it is called a deep vein thrombosis. The clot itself is not life threatening, but if it comes loose it can be carried in the blood to another part of the body where it can cause problems – this is called venous thromboembolism. If the clot is carried to the lungs, it is called a pulmonary embolism, which can be fatal.

Even if a blood clot does not come loose, it can still cause long-term damage to the veins leading to pain and swelling.

## Rivaroxaban

Rivaroxaban (also called Xarelto) is a drug that is used to treat blood clots and to prevent blood clots from forming in blood vessels. It does this by stopping a substance called Factor Xa from working. Factor Xa is necessary in the formation of blood clots.

### What does this mean for me?

When NICE recommends a treatment, the NHS must make sure it is available to those people it could help, normally within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

So, if you have deep vein thrombosis, and you and your doctor think that rivaroxaban is the right treatment for you (see 'What has NICE said?' on page 2), you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS. Please see [www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance](http://www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance) if you think you are eligible for the treatment but it is not available.

## More information

The organisations below can provide more information and support for people with deep vein thrombosis. NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

- AntiCoagulation Europe, 020 8289 6875  
[www.anticoagulationeurope.org](http://www.anticoagulationeurope.org)
- Lifeblood: The Thrombosis Charity, 01558 650222  
[www.thrombosis-charity.org.uk](http://www.thrombosis-charity.org.uk)

NHS Choices ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)) may be a good place to find out more. Your local patient advice and liaison service (usually known as 'PALS') may be able to give you more information and support. If you live in Wales you should speak to NHS Direct Wales for information on who to contact.

## About NICE

NICE produces guidance (advice) for the NHS about preventing, diagnosing and treating medical conditions. The guidance is written by independent experts, including healthcare professionals and people representing patients and carers. They consider the evidence on the condition and treatments, the views of patients and carers and the experiences of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, and consider the costs involved. Staff working in the NHS are expected to follow this guidance.

*To find out more about NICE, its work and how it reaches decisions, see [www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance](http://www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance)*

*This document and other versions of the guidance aimed at healthcare professionals are available at [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/TA261](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/TA261)*

*The NICE website has a screen reader service called Browsealoud, which allows you to listen to our guidance. Click on the Browsealoud logo on the NICE website to use this service.*

*We encourage NHS and voluntary organisations to use text from this document in their own information about deep vein thrombosis.*

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