

# BLOOD THINNERS

(Antiplatelets)

**Enteric Coated ASA 81 or 325 mg  
(Aspirin®)**

**Clopidogrel 75 mg  
(Plavix®)**

*Blood thinners (antiplatelets) lower the risk of having another heart attack. They work by preventing the formation of clots in your heart arteries. This is especially important if you have stents placed in one or more of your heart arteries. You will need to take both ASA (Aspirin®) and clopidogrel (Plavix®) after having stents placed. It is important that you take these medications exactly as prescribed. **MAKE SURE THAT YOU FILL YOUR PRESCRIPTIONS FOR ASA (Aspirin®) AND CLOPIDOGREL (Plavix®) as soon as you leave hospital. NEVER stop taking these drugs without talking to your heart doctor, even if told to do so by another healthcare provider.***

1. These medications are taken ONCE daily. Take them at the same time, best suited to you, every day. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for the next dose. **DO NOT** take extra medication to make up the missed dose.
2. These medications do not need to be taken with food, but some people may find ASA (Aspirin®) better tolerated with food since it can irritate the stomach.



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3. ASA (Aspirin®) and clopidogrel (Plavix®) can increase your risk of bleeding. If you get a cut or nosebleed, apply pressure for several minutes until the bleeding stops. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these side effects:

- Bad stomach pain
- Bloody vomit or vomit that looks like coffee grounds
- Blood in your stools or urine, black tarry stools
- Unusual or excessive bleeding or bruising

Less severe side effects are upset stomach, easy bruising, and heartburn (acid reflux). Tell your pharmacist or other healthcare provider if these are a problem for you.

4. People who take clopidogrel (Plavix®) have a small risk of developing a rash. Usually the rash can be treated without stopping the medication. Contact your healthcare provider if you develop a rash. **DO NOT** stop taking clopidogrel (Plavix®) unless you are told to do so.

5. Some medications, including over-the-counter and herbal medications, contain things that can thin your blood or interact with ASA (Aspirin®) or clopidogrel (Plavix®). It is important not to take any extra blood thinners other than the ones prescribed to you by your healthcare provider as this will increase your risk of bleeding. Check with your pharmacist or other healthcare provider before starting any new medication. If you need to take an over-the-counter medication for aches and pains, acetaminophen (Tylenol®) is the safest thing to take.

6. Make sure any doctor(s), dentist(s), or other healthcare providers you see know that you are taking these medications. You may need to stop taking them before some kinds of surgery or dental procedures. But check with your heart doctor first before stopping these medications.

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***NOTE: This information is not intended to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions, or adverse effects for these medications. Talk to your hospital or community pharmacist for more information or if you have any questions.***



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