



What is Fragmin (dalteparin)?

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

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Fragmin (Dalteparin) is an anticoagulant medication. “*Anti*” means against and *coagulant* refers to blood clotting. Therefore, Fragmin helps reduce harmful clots from forming in the blood.

How does Fragmin work?

Fragmin works by inhibiting the body’s natural clotting factors. Blood clots can cause serious medical conditions such as heart attack and stroke.

Why do I need Fragmin?

This medication is used for several days up to a month after hip or knee replacement surgery and in some cases following abdominal surgery. It is during this time that harmful blood clots are most likely to form. Fragmin is also used if you are confined to bed because of a serious illness.

In addition, Fragmin is used to prevent harmful blood clots from forming in the arteries of the heart during episodes of chest pain and heart attacks. Fragmin also may be used for other conditions as determined by your doctor.

How is Fragmin given?

Fragmin is given by an injection under the skin (subcutaneously) in your abdomen.

What are potential adverse effects?

As with all anticoagulants, bleeding is the major adverse effect of Fragmin. Bleeding can occur at virtually any site (gums, urine, eye, skin).

You should contact your healthcare provider if you experience bleeding that does not stop after a few minutes. Other symptoms you should contact your healthcare provider include:

- Persistent headache
- Red or dark brown colored urine
- Nosebleeds
- Vomiting blood
- Bleeding gums
- Bleeding when shaving
- Red or black colored bowel movements
- Unusually heavy vaginal bleeding
- Fall
- Injure yourself

Do I need to have my blood monitored?

Unlike some other anticoagulants, (for example: Coumadin), blood testing is not required for Fragmin dosing. You may be getting your blood drawn for other reasons depending on your medical condition.

Will I stay on Fragmin for a long time?

Length of time on Fragmin is dependent on your medical condition. Some patients are only on Fragmin while hospitalized, while others will continue for a short time after leaving the hospital. Some patients will be transitioned to Coumadin (warfarin) which is an oral anticoagulant medication. Close follow up care is required if you need to take Coumadin for an on-going time period. Your physician will generally overlap Fragmin and Coumadin for a couple of days and then Fragmin is discontinued. Again, your physician will give you a specific plan of care. For more information on Coumadin, see the Greenwich Hospital Patient Education Information Sheet titled "What is Coumadin (warfarin)?"

What are some potential interactions?

It is important that you inform your health care provider about any medications or supplements that you take. Any drugs that can potentially increase bleeding risk are a concern. Some common examples are ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin (some patients are on aspirin and Fragmin as advised by their physician). Herbal medications such as garlic, ginger, ginkgo, and ginseng all have increased bleeding risks.

I forgot to take my Fragmin yesterday. Should I just double dose today?

DO NOT take an extra injection of Fragmin to catch up. Inject the missed dose as soon as possible on the same day, but do NOT take a double dose the next day to make up for a missed dose. Tell your physician if you have forgotten to take a scheduled dose of Fragmin.

Reference:

MedlinePlus: The US Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. Dalteparin Injection Drug Information. Last Reviewed 09/01/2008.
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a696006.html>

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