

## **What is Lovenox (enoxaparin)?**

### **PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET**

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

## **How does Lovenox work?**

Lovenox 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 Lovenox?**

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. Lovenox is also used if you are confined to bed because of a serious illness.

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

## **How is Lovenox given?**

Lovenox 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 Lovenox. 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, such as:

- 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 Lovenox dosing. You may be getting your blood drawn for other reasons depending on your medical condition.

## **Will I stay on Lovenox for a long time?**

Length of time on Lovenox is dependent on your medical condition. Some patients are only on Lovenox 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 Lovenox and Coumadin for a couple of days and then Lovenox 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 Lovenox as advised by their physician). Herbal medications such as garlic, ginger, ginkgo, and ginseng all have increased bleeding risks.

## **I forgot to take my Lovenox yesterday. Should I just double dose today?**

DO NOT take an extra injection of Lovenox 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 Lovenox.

### Reference:

MedlinePlus: The US Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. Enoxaparin Injection Drug Information. Last Reviewed 9.01.2008. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a601210.html>

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