

Lovenox

When you have, or are at risk of having deep vein thrombosis, or DVT, you may be prescribed Lovenox. You may also be familiar with its generic name, Enoxaparin. Lovenox is a high alert medication, which means if you do not take it exactly as prescribed, it may cause illness or injury.

To understand how Lovenox works, let's look at how deep vein thrombosis can affect your body. When you have DVT, blood clots can form in the deep veins of your body; usually in your legs, and can cause serious health problems.

Sometimes a clot may break away and travel through your blood vessels. Called an 'embolus', this moving clot can travel to the heart or lungs and cause severe complications including heart attack, difficulty breathing, even death.

Lovenox is an injectable medication used to break up these clots and keep the blood thin. It comes in pre-filled syringes. Your healthcare provider will decide how much Lovenox you need to take but pre-filled syringes come in 30, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120 or 150 milligram doses. Make sure you understand exactly what dose you are supposed to take to avoid injury.

Lovenox is a powerful medication. Some people should not take it. Do not take Lovenox if you are allergic to: any of its ingredients, Enoxaparin, or other blood thinner medications like Heparin.

Do not take Lovenox if you have active or uncontrolled bleeding or low levels of platelets in your blood.

Lovenox is not expected to harm an unborn baby but tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant or plan to get pregnant while taking Lovenox. A different medication may be available for you. Do not breastfeed while taking Lovenox.

Before taking Lovenox, tell your healthcare provider if you have a history of: kidney or liver disease, uncontrolled high blood pressure, stomach ulcers, or eye problems caused by diabetes.

Let all of your healthcare providers know you are taking Lovenox, including your dentist. You may need to stop taking your medication a few days before your appointment.

Before taking Lovenox, give your healthcare provider a complete list of all other medications you use, including vitamins and herbal supplements.

Some over-the-counter medications you may take can increase your risk of bleeding. When taking Lovenox, avoid: Aspirin, Ibuprofen like Advil or Motrin, and Naproxen like Aleve. Talk to your healthcare provider about your medication options.

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When taking Lovenox you will have regular blood tests to see how well it is working. Keep all of your healthcare appointments.

The most common side effect of Lovenox is bleeding or bruising. Be careful to avoid getting a cut or injury.

Some other common side effects include: anemia, headache, dizziness, and shortness of breath.

If you do notice any of these side effects contact your healthcare provider about how to manage them.

If you require a spinal tap or spinal anesthesia called an epidural while taking Lovenox, you are at an increased risk of developing a very serious blood clot around your spine. This can cause paralysis.

If you have an allergic reaction like: trouble breathing, hives, or swelling of your face or throat, call 911.

If you: are coughing up or vomiting blood, have urine that looks red or rusty, have red, black, or tarry bowel movements, or have pain, swelling or discomfort in the stomach, abdomen or joints. These can be a sign of internal bleeding. Call 911.

If you have: sudden leg or foot pain, purple toes or fingers, sudden dizziness, weakness or headache, shortness of breath, fast heartbeat, pale skin, yellowing of the eyes or skin, or you stop urinating, call 911 and get help immediately.

This is not the complete list of side effects. Make sure you discuss all possible side effects with your healthcare provider.

Take Lovenox exactly as prescribed. If you are injecting Lovenox yourself, meet with your healthcare provider to ensure you know how to inject correctly.

Lovenox should be injected into your abdomen, or stomach area, 2 inches from your belly button. Alternate sides of your belly button with each injection. This helps keep your skin and underlying tissues healthy.

You may be told to take your Lovenox every 12 hours, or you may need to take it once daily.

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip your missed dose and return to your normal medication schedule. Do not double dose. If you think you have taken too much Lovenox, call 911.

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Store Lovenox at room temperature, away from moisture and direct sunlight. Your bathroom medicine cabinet is not the best place because of moisture.

Do not use Lovenox past the expiration date printed on the pre-filled syringe. Lovenox is clear. Never use Lovenox that has changed color or has particles in it.

Do not leave your medication where it can get too hot or too cold. Always store your medication out of sight and out of reach of children to prevent accidents.

When you are done taking Lovenox, contact your healthcare provider or pharmacist about the proper way to dispose of any unused medications. Do not flush this medication down the toilet.

Lovenox can reduce your risk of dangerous blood clots. But it is a powerful medication that should only be taken exactly as prescribed. If you have any questions about Lovenox, ask your healthcare provider and pharmacist for more information.