



## PRIOR AUTHORIZATION POLICY

- POLICY:** Anticoagulants – Dabigatran Prior Authorization Policy
- Pradaxa® (dabigatran etexilate mesylate capsules – Boehringer Ingelheim, generic)
  - Pradaxa® Oral Pellets (dabigatran etexilate oral pellets – Boehringer Ingelheim)

**REVIEW DATE:** 05/21/2025

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### INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

THE FOLLOWING COVERAGE POLICY APPLIES TO HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS ADMINISTERED BY CIGNA COMPANIES. CERTAIN CIGNA COMPANIES AND/OR LINES OF BUSINESS ONLY PROVIDE UTILIZATION REVIEW SERVICES TO CLIENTS AND DO NOT MAKE COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS. REFERENCES TO STANDARD BENEFIT PLAN LANGUAGE AND COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS DO NOT APPLY TO THOSE CLIENTS. COVERAGE POLICIES ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE IN INTERPRETING CERTAIN STANDARD BENEFIT PLANS ADMINISTERED BY CIGNA COMPANIES. PLEASE NOTE, THE TERMS OF A CUSTOMER'S PARTICULAR BENEFIT PLAN DOCUMENT [GROUP SERVICE AGREEMENT, EVIDENCE OF COVERAGE, CERTIFICATE OF COVERAGE, SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION (SPD) OR SIMILAR PLAN DOCUMENT] MAY DIFFER SIGNIFICANTLY FROM THE STANDARD BENEFIT PLANS UPON WHICH THESE COVERAGE POLICIES ARE BASED. FOR EXAMPLE, A CUSTOMER'S BENEFIT PLAN DOCUMENT MAY CONTAIN A SPECIFIC EXCLUSION RELATED TO A TOPIC ADDRESSED IN A COVERAGE POLICY. IN THE EVENT OF A CONFLICT, A CUSTOMER'S BENEFIT PLAN DOCUMENT ALWAYS SUPERSEDES THE INFORMATION IN THE COVERAGE POLICIES. IN THE ABSENCE OF A CONTROLLING FEDERAL OR STATE COVERAGE MANDATE, BENEFITS ARE ULTIMATELY DETERMINED BY THE TERMS OF THE APPLICABLE BENEFIT PLAN DOCUMENT. COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS IN EACH SPECIFIC INSTANCE REQUIRE CONSIDERATION OF 1) THE TERMS OF THE APPLICABLE BENEFIT PLAN DOCUMENT IN EFFECT ON THE DATE OF SERVICE; 2) ANY APPLICABLE LAWS/REGULATIONS; 3) ANY RELEVANT COLLATERAL SOURCE MATERIALS INCLUDING COVERAGE POLICIES AND; 4) THE SPECIFIC FACTS OF THE PARTICULAR SITUATION. EACH COVERAGE REQUEST SHOULD BE REVIEWED ON ITS OWN MERITS. MEDICAL DIRECTORS ARE EXPECTED TO EXERCISE CLINICAL JUDGMENT WHERE APPROPRIATE AND HAVE DISCRETION IN MAKING INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS. WHERE COVERAGE FOR CARE OR SERVICES DOES NOT DEPEND ON SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES, REIMBURSEMENT WILL ONLY BE PROVIDED IF A REQUESTED SERVICE(S) IS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RELEVANT CRITERIA OUTLINED IN THE APPLICABLE COVERAGE POLICY, INCLUDING COVERED DIAGNOSIS AND/OR PROCEDURE CODE(S). REIMBURSEMENT IS NOT ALLOWED FOR SERVICES WHEN BILLED FOR CONDITIONS OR DIAGNOSES THAT ARE NOT COVERED UNDER THIS COVERAGE POLICY (SEE "CODING INFORMATION" BELOW). WHEN BILLING, PROVIDERS MUST USE THE MOST APPROPRIATE CODES AS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE SUBMISSION. CLAIMS SUBMITTED FOR SERVICES THAT ARE NOT ACCOMPANIED BY COVERED CODE(S) UNDER THE APPLICABLE COVERAGE POLICY WILL BE DENIED AS NOT COVERED. COVERAGE POLICIES RELATE EXCLUSIVELY TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS. COVERAGE POLICIES ARE NOT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TREATMENT AND SHOULD NEVER BE USED AS TREATMENT GUIDELINES. IN CERTAIN MARKETS, DELEGATED VENDOR GUIDELINES MAY BE USED TO SUPPORT MEDICAL NECESSITY AND OTHER COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS.

## CIGNA NATIONAL FORMULARY COVERAGE:

### OVERVIEW

Dabigatran capsules (Pradaxa, generic), a direct thrombin inhibitor, is indicated for the following uses:<sup>1</sup>

- **Non-valvular atrial fibrillation**, to reduce the risk of stroke and systemic embolism in adults.
- **Prophylaxis of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE)**, in adults who have undergone hip replacement surgery.
- **Treatment of DVT and PE** in adults who have been treated with a parenteral anticoagulant for 5 to 10 days, as well as **reduction in the risk of recurrence of DVT and PE** in patients who have been previously treated.
- **Treatment of venous thromboembolic events (VTE)**, in pediatric patients 8 to < 18 years of age who have been treated with a parenteral anticoagulant

for  $\geq 5$  days, as well as **to reduce the risk of recurrence of VTE** in pediatric patients 8 to  $< 18$  years of age who have been previously treated.

Pradaxa Oral Pellets, a direct thrombin inhibitor, is indicated for the following uses:<sup>12</sup>

- **VTE**, treatment in pediatric patients 3 months to  $< 12$  years of age who have been treated with a parenteral anticoagulant for  $\geq 5$  days, as well as **to reduce the risk of recurrence of VTE** in pediatric patients 3 months to  $< 12$  years of age who have been previously treated.

It is noted in the prescribing information for dabigatran capsules and Pradaxa Oral Pellets that not all dosage forms are approved for the same indications and age groups.<sup>1,12</sup> Due to differences in bioavailability, the individual products are not substitutable on a mg-per-mg basis.

## Guidelines

Guidelines are available which support the use of direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs) in their commonly used clinical settings, such as DVT/PE<sup>2-5</sup> and atrial fibrillation.<sup>6,7</sup> In patients who are eligible for a DOAC, these are generally preferred over vitamin K antagonists (e.g., warfarin). It is noted that in the randomized trials in atrial fibrillation, DOACs were consistently at least non-inferior to warfarin regarding the composite of stroke or systemic embolism and were associated with a lower risk of serious bleeding.<sup>7</sup>

## Other Uses with Supportive Evidence

Dabigatran has data supporting its use in prophylaxis after knee replacement surgery; these data are limited to adults.<sup>9-11</sup> Although data are not robust regarding use of DOACs in other off-label thromboembolic-related conditions, American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST) guidelines (2024) suggest anticoagulation for certain patients (e.g., superficial vein thrombosis).<sup>2</sup> The choice of anticoagulant is often individualized based on patient-specific factors; therefore, for certain patients, DOAC use may be considered in practice. Evidence for DOACs is limited for off-label scenarios; in general, there is more clinical experience with agents such as vitamin K antagonists (e.g., warfarin) and low molecular weight heparin in these settings.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Prior Authorization is recommended for prescription benefit coverage of dabigatran capsules and Pradaxa oral pellets. All approvals are provided for the duration noted below. In cases where the approval is authorized in months, 1 month is equal to 30 days

**I. Pradaxa® (dabigatran etexilate mesylate capsules - Boehringer Ingelheim, generic)**  
**is(are) covered as medically necessary when the following criteria is(are) met for FDA-approved indication(s) or other uses with supportive evidence (if applicable):**

## **FDA-Approved Indications**

- 1. Atrial Fibrillation (or Atrial Flutter).** Approve for 1 year if the patient is  $\geq 18$  years of age.
- 2. Deep Vein Thrombosis or Pulmonary Embolism, Treatment.** Approve for 1 year if the patient is  $\geq 8$  years of age.
- 3. Deep Vein Thrombosis or Pulmonary Embolism, To Reduce the Risk of Recurrence.** Approve for 1 year if the patient is  $\geq 8$  years of age.
- 4. Deep Vein Thrombosis or Pulmonary Embolism in a Patient Undergoing Hip Replacement Surgery, Prophylaxis.** Approve for 60 days if the patient is  $\geq 18$  years of age.

## **Other Uses with Supportive Evidence**

- 5. Deep Vein Thrombosis in a Patient Undergoing Knee Replacement Surgery, Prophylaxis.** Approve for 60 days if the patient is  $\geq 18$  years of age.
- 6. Treatment or Prevention of Other Thromboembolic-Related Conditions.**  
Approve for 6 months if the patient meets BOTH of the following (A and B):  
Note: Examples of other thromboembolic-related conditions include superficial vein thrombosis, splanchnic vein thrombosis, hepatic vein thrombosis, or prophylaxis of venous thromboembolism in a high-risk patient.  
**A)** Patient is  $\geq 8$  years of age; AND  
**B)** Patient meets ONE of the following (i or ii):
  - i.** Patient has tried warfarin, fondaparinux, or a low molecular weight heparin product (e.g., enoxaparin, Fragmin [dalteparin injection]); OR  
Note: A patient who has tried Eliquis (apixaban tablets or tablets for oral suspension), Eliquis Sprinkle (apixaban capsules for oral suspension), Xarelto (rivaroxaban tablets and oral suspension), or Savaysa (edoxaban tablets) is not required to try warfarin, fondaparinux, or a low molecular weight heparin product.
  - ii.** Patient has been started on dabigatran capsules for the treatment of an acute thromboembolic condition.

## **II. Pradaxa® Oral Pellets (dabigatran etexilate oral pellets - Boehringer Ingelheim)**

**is(are) covered as medically necessary when the following criteria is(are) met for FDA-approved indication(s) or other uses with supportive evidence (if applicable):**

## **FDA-Approved Indications**

- 1. Venous Thromboembolic Events, Treatment.** Approve for 1 year if the patient is  $\geq 3$  months to  $< 12$  years of age.

Note: Examples of venous thromboembolic events include deep vein thrombosis, cerebral venous thrombosis or sinus thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, and central-venous thrombosis.

- 2. Venous Thromboembolic Events, To Reduce the Risk of Recurrence.** Approve for 1 year if the patient is  $\geq 3$  months to  $< 12$  years of age.

Note: Examples of venous thromboembolic events include deep vein thrombosis, cerebral venous thrombosis or sinus thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, and central-venous thrombosis.

## **Other Uses with Supportive Evidence**

- 3. Treatment or Prevention of Other Thromboembolic-Related Conditions.** Approve for 6 months if the patient meets BOTH of the following (A and B):

Note: Examples of other thromboembolic-related conditions include superficial vein thrombosis, splanchnic vein thrombosis, hepatic vein thrombosis, or prophylaxis of venous thromboembolism in a high-risk patient.

**A)** Patient is  $\geq 3$  months to  $< 12$  years of age; AND

**B)** Patient meets ONE of the following (i or ii):

- i.** Patient has tried warfarin, fondaparinux, or a low molecular weight heparin product (e.g., enoxaparin, Fragmin [dalteparin injection]); OR

Note: A patient who has tried Eliquis (apixaban tablets or tablets for oral suspension), Eliquis Sprinkle (apixaban capsules for oral suspension), Xarelto (rivaroxaban tablets and oral suspension), or Savaysa (edoxaban tablets) is not required to try warfarin, fondaparinux, or a low molecular weight heparin product.

- ii.** Patient has been started on Pradaxa oral pellets for the treatment of an acute thromboembolic condition.

## **CONDITIONS NOT COVERED**

- **Pradaxa® (dabigatran etexilate mesylate capsules ( Boehringer Ingelheim, generic)**
- **Pradaxa® Oral Pellets (dabigatran etexilate oral pellets ( Boehringer Ingelheim)**

**is(are) considered not medically necessary for ANY other use(s) including the following (this list may not be all inclusive; criteria will be updated as new published data are available):**

- 1. Venous Thromboembolism in an Acutely Ill Medical Patient, Prophylaxis.**

Xarelto is labeled for prophylaxis of venous thromboembolism in acutely ill medical patients and is supported in clinical practice guidelines.

## REFERENCES

1. Pradaxa® capsules [prescribing information]. Ridgefield, CT: Boehringer Ingelheim; November 2023.
2. Stevens SM, Woller SC, Kreuziger LB, et al. Antithrombotic therapy for VTE disease. Second update of the CHEST guideline and Expert Panel Report. *Chest*. 2024; 166(2): 388-404.
3. Key NS, Khorana AA, Kuderer NM, et al. Venous thromboembolism prophylaxis and treatment in patients with cancer: ASCO guideline update. *J Clin Oncol*. 2023;41:3063-3071.
4. The NCCN Cancer-Associated Venous Thromboembolic Disease Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (version 1.2025 – February 27, 2025). © 2025 National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Available at: <http://www.nccn.org>. Accessed on May 15, 2025.
5. Ortel TL, Neumann I, Ageno W, Beyth R, et al. American Society of Hematology 2020 guidelines for management of venous thromboembolism: treatment of deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism. *Blood Adv*. 2020;4(19):4693-4738.
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7. Joglar JA, Chung MK, Armbruster AL, et al. 2023 ACC/AHA/ACCP/HRS guidelines for the diagnosis and management of atrial fibrillation. A report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Joint Committee on Practice guidelines. Developed in collaboration and endorsed by the American College of Clinical Pharmacy and the Heart Rhythm Society. *J Am Coll Cardiol*. 2024;83(1):109-279.
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11. Burness CD, McKeage K. Dabigatran Etexilate. A review of its use for the prevention of venous thromboembolism after total hip or knee replacement surgery. *Drugs*. 2012;72(7):963-986.
12. Pradaxa® oral pellets [prescribing information]. Ridgefield, CT: Boehringer Ingelheim; November 2023.

## HISTORY

Type of Revision	Summary of Changes	Review Date
Annual Revision	Pradaxa oral pellets were added to the policy. Conditions for approval were also added.	04/05/2023
Annual Revision	No criteria changes.	01/24/2024
Annual Revision	No criteria changes.	02/12/2025
Early Annual Revision	<p><b>Dabigatran capsules, Treatment or Prevention of Other Thromboembolic-Related Conditions:</b> For the criterion that requires a patient to try warfarin, fondaparinux, or a low molecular weight heparin product, Eliquis tablets for oral suspension and Eliquis Sprinkle capsules for oral suspension were added to the Note of medications that a patient could alternatively try.</p> <p><b>Pradaxa Oral Pellets, Treatment or Prevention of Other Thromboembolic-Related Conditions:</b> For the criterion that requires a patient to try warfarin, fondaparinux, or a low molecular weight heparin product, Eliquis tablets for oral suspension, Eliquis Sprinkle capsules for oral suspension, and Xarelto oral suspension</p>	05/21/2025

	were added to the Note of medications that a patient could alternatively try.	
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