



Important Information About Blood Thinners and Spine Procedures And Active Infection for ANY Procedure



At Interventional Spine and Pain Center, your safety is our top priority. If you are scheduled for a spine procedure or injection, it's important to understand how taking blood thinners can affect your treatment.

Why You May Need to Stop Blood Thinners

Blood thinners, or anticoagulants, reduce your blood's ability to clot. While they are crucial for preventing strokes, heart attacks, and other conditions, they can increase the risk of bleeding during certain medical procedures, particularly spine procedures.

For many spine procedures, such as epidural injections or other spinal interventions, we may ask you to stop taking blood thinners in advance. This is because excessive bleeding around the spine can lead to serious complications, including nerve damage.

Spine Procedures and Blood Thinners

Most Spine Procedures: We usually recommend stopping blood thinners several days before most spine procedures. Your doctor will give you specific instructions.

Some Spine Procedures: In some cases, it may be safer to remain on your blood thinners. Your healthcare team will evaluate the risks and guide you based on your medical history.

Common Blood Thinners and Timing for Holding Before Neuraxial Procedures

Blood Thinner	How Long to Stop Before Procedure
Aspirin	7 days
Plavix (Clopidogrel)	7 days
Eliquis (Apixaban)	72 hours (48 hours if normal kidney function)
Xarelto (Rivaroxaban)	72 hours (48 hours if normal kidney function)
Warfarin (Coumadin)	5 days (depends on INR)
Pradaxa (Dabigatran)	5 days (3 days if normal kidney function)
Lovenox (Enoxaparin)	24 hours
Brilinta (Ticagrelor)	7 days

If your blood thinner is not on this list, ask the staff when to stop it.

Non-Spine Injections and Blood Thinners

For non-spine injections (e.g., joint or muscle injections), it is **often** safe to remain on blood thinners. However, each case is different—ask your doctor for advice.

Active Infections and Injections/Procedures

Procedures (even minor injections) should not be done if you have an active infection:

Fever: A fever indicates your body is fighting an infection, and we may need to postpone your procedure. You must be fever free for 24 hours prior to any injection.

Antibiotics: If you are on antibiotics, inform us, we WILL **NOT** perform an injection if you are on an antibiotic to treat an active infection. In rare cases, antibiotics are being taken prophylactically and an injection can still be done.

Important Reminder

Check with Your Provider: ***It is paramount that you consult with the provider who prescribes your blood thinner before stopping it.***

In some rare cases, patients are told they can **NEVER** stop their blood thinner (for example, those who have experienced clots, heart attacks, or strokes after stopping blood thinners short term in the past).

What You Should Do Before Your Procedure

Inform Us: Let us know all the medications you're taking, including blood thinners.

Follow Instructions: Follow the timeline for stopping blood thinners carefully to avoid risks.

Communicate Changes: If your health status changes (e.g., fever, infection), inform us immediately.

Conclusion

Your safety is our priority. If you have any questions, please contact us.

We are here to guide you through your procedure safely.