

## **Fatal Bleeding Associated with Xarelto**

Xarelto has been associated with an increasing number of severe internal bleeding episodes. There is an ongoing dispute with this medication's place in therapy as more post-marketing side effects are documented. The data shows Xarelto's side effects may exceed that of all other blood thinners. This leaves questions as to if it is the right therapy to choose among the multiple anticoagulant options.

Xarelto (Rivaroxaban) has recently become a popular alternative to traditional blood thinners due to its less frequent and stringent monitoring parameters and oral dosing regimen. Patients should be carefully taught the benefit of this therapy as well as the risks. With the warning and education of bleeding, patients will then know ways to look for increased bleeding to prevent a fatal event. This includes prolonged bleeding after a minor cut/injury, increased bleeding under the skin, or unusual bruising. Though Xarelto can cause other types of bleeding that may be more difficult for a patient to observe such as intestinal/abdominal bleeding, bleeding from the rectum, or the brain. The drug also has a very dangerous warning of spinal hematomas that could leave a patient paralyzed.

Patients should also be informed to tell their health care providers of any thrombotic events if they have recently transitioned from warfarin to Xarelto. They should also have clear understanding of the lack of antidote or reversal agent to counteract the anticoagulant effects.

Bleeding while taking Xarelto is more likely to occur in patients who are also taking medications such as aspirin or aspirin containing products, NSAIDs, warfarin, heparin, clopidogrel, or any other medication to prevent or treat blood clots.

### **References:**

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