

What is dipyridamole?

Dipyridamole is a prescription antiplatelet drug that prevents the formation of blood clots. Extended-release dipyridamole is combined with aspirin into a single pill (Aggrenox) for preventing another stroke in women who have already had one.

Who might receive dipyridamole for stroke?

If you have a blocked-vessel (ischemic) stroke, extended-release dipyridamole combined with aspirin (Aggrenox) should be prescribed to reduce your risk for a repeat stroke or TIA, especially if your stroke was not caused by a blood clot from the heart.^{5, 11} Other treatment options include aspirin alone and clopidogrel alone.

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Extended-release dipyridamole combined with aspirin is better than aspirin alone at preventing another stroke.^{5, 15, 16} In one study of 6602 patients, this drug combination reduced the risk of a second stroke by 23% over a period of 2 years, compared with an 18% reduction in patients taking aspirin alone.¹⁷ There is ongoing research comparing Aggrenox (combined aspirin and extended-release dipyridamole) with clopidogrel to prevent repeat strokes.¹⁸

Who should not receive dipyridamole?

Women who have a history of bleeding problems, are allergic to aspirin or NSAIDs, or who are pregnant should not take dipyridamole.

What are the risks of dipyridamole?

The most common side effect of dipyridamole is persistent headache. Other possible side effects include nausea, dizziness, fainting, and an increased risk of bleeding in the stomach.

Dipyridamole Quick Reference Table

Dipyridamole Combined with Aspirin

Generic name: dipyridamole and aspirin

Brand name: Aggrenox

How it is given: Pill

What it is used for: To prevent another blocked-vessel (ischemic) stroke in women who have had a stroke

You should not be treated with it if:

- You have had a bleeding (hemorrhagic) stroke
- You have received tPA in the last 24 hours
- You are allergic to aspirin or dipyridamole

Pregnancy/nursing: Aggrenox can harm the fetus when given during pregnancy and should be avoided

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