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## INFORMED CONSENT FOR STOPPING OR CONTINUING BLOOD-THINNERS (ANTICOAGULANTS)

### WHAT ARE BLOOD-THINNERS?

Blood-thinning medications (“anticoagulants”) are powerful tools to prevent complications of life-threatening blood clots and have proven benefits in preventing heart attacks and strokes. They are prescribed to prevent these blood clots from forming in people who are at risk. The benefits of these drugs must always be weighed against bleeding risks, particularly in patients undergoing elective surgical procedures. One of the side-effects of anticoagulants is an increase in bleeding. Patients who take blood thinners like aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, Pradaxa, etc., present challenges when surgery is needed.

### HOW WILL BLOOD-THINNERS AFFECT MY VISION AND CONDITION?

Bleeding is a potential complication of **any** surgical procedure. People who take blood-thinning medicine around the time of their procedure are more likely to have bleeding complications during and after surgery. For operations in and around the eye, this bleeding may, in **rare** cases, cause loss of vision or blindness.

If you stop taking your blood-thinner(s) before surgery to lessen the chance of bleeding, you may be at greater risk of developing a life-threatening blood clot, which can cause very serious conditions such as heart attack, stroke, pulmonary embolism, and deep vein thrombosis. If, on the other hand, you continue your anticoagulants you may be at increased risk of bleeding complications. ***If you are on blood-thinners and need to have surgery, you must be willing to accept the potential for increased risk of one of these complications—blood clot or bleeding.***

Your surgeon and your primary doctor/cardiologist will weigh the relative risks and benefits of stopping or continuing your medications before surgery and counsel you accordingly. On rare occasion, this may mean that elective surgery will be postponed or cancelled.

There is always a chance that you may develop a complication related to how your blood thinners are managed around the time of your surgery. Your doctors will help you understand the relative risks involved so you can make an informed decision about how to proceed.

### PATIENT’S ACCEPTANCE OF RISKS

As a patient on blood-thinners (such as aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin, Pradaxa, etc), I understand that stopping these medicines before surgery may increase my risk of a having a heart attack, stroke or other life-threatening blood clot. I also understand that if I continue my blood-thinners, I have an increased risk of bleeding complications that may result, in rare cases, in vision loss or blindness.

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Patient (or person authorized to sign for patient)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date