

# Analysis of Apixaban Prescribing in Patients with Atrial Fibrillation in Primary Care Settings

Direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs) are a preferred first-line treatment for anticoagulation in atrial fibrillation (Afib), replacing traditional therapies such as vitamin K antagonists. Apixaban's predictable pharmacokinetics and improved safety profile reduces risk of major bleeding and eliminates the need for frequent lab monitoring or dietary restrictions, making it a favorable anticoagulant in primary care settings.<sup>1</sup> Previous studies in outpatient cardiology settings have identified inappropriate dosing, which can increase risk of stroke, major bleeding, and adverse events.<sup>2-3</sup>

## Apixaban Monitoring Recommendations:

- Annual complete blood count (CBC)
- Annual liver function tests (LFTs)
- Annual serum creatinine (SCr)

## Apixaban Dosing Recommendation for Afib:

- 5mg orally twice daily with dose reduction to 2.5mg twice daily if patient meets **two** of the following criteria:  
 Age ≥80 years, Weight ≤60 kg, **or** SCr ≥1.5 mg/dL

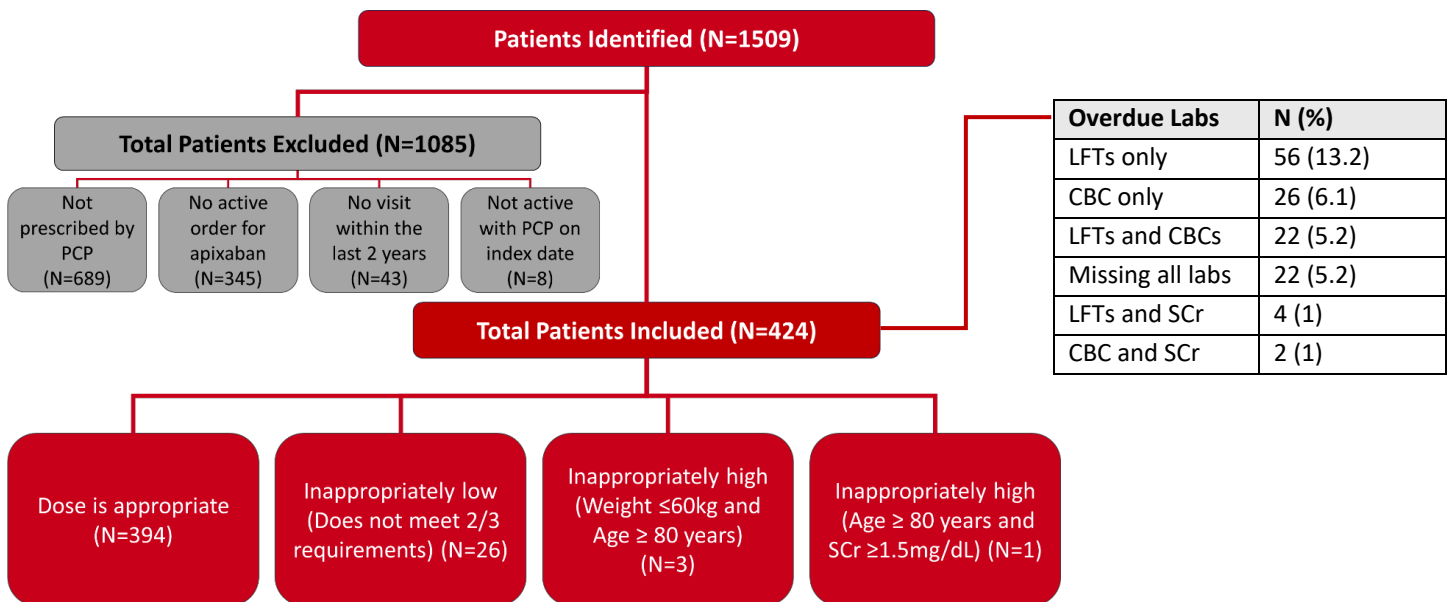
## Objectives

- Assess the proportion of patients with Afib who are prescribed inappropriate doses of apixaban within a network of patient-centered medical homes at a large academic medical center
- Assess the proportion of patients overdue for recommended monitoring

## Inclusion criteria

- Active apixaban prescription by primary care provider from 6/16/2023 to 6/16/2025
- Diagnosis of Afib
- Visit with primary care provider in the last 2 years

## Results of Retrospective Chart Review



## Conclusions

- Identified discrepancy between primary care clinical practice and guideline-recommended dosing of apixaban, particularly when a reduced dose should be utilized
- Highlighted an opportunity for pharmacist-led quality improvement initiatives for high-risk medications in a primary care setting
- Potential for provider education regarding underutilization of laboratory monitoring for management of apixaban

## References

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- Kocabaş U et al. Prevalence and Associated factors of inappropriate dosing of direct Oral anticoagulants in patients with Atrial Fibrillation: the ANATOLIA-AF Study. Cardiovasc Drugs Ther 38, 581–599 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10557-022-07409-w>
- Sugrue A, et al. Inappropriate Dosing of Direct Oral Anticoagulants in Patients with Atrial Fibrillation. Am J Cardiol. 2021 Apr 1;144:52-59. doi: 10.1016/j.amjcard.2020.12.062. Epub 2020 Dec 29. PMID: 33385355; PMCID: PMC808834