

Project to Collect Medical Near-Miss/
Adverse Event Information

Medical Safety Information

No.149, April 2019

Operation/Examination Postponed Due to Delays in Stopping Drugs



Seven cases have been reported in which a planned operation or examination was postponed due to the failure to identify or issue an order to stop a drug which the medical institution's rules stipulated must be stopped before an invasive procedure (information collection period: from January 1, 2014 to February 28, 2019). This information was compiled on the basis of the content featured in the Analysis Themes section of the 44th Quarterly Report.

Cases have been reported in which a planned operation or examination was postponed because of a delay in stopping a drug which the rules stipulated must be stopped before surgery or an examination.

Postponed Operation/Examination* ¹	Drug Not Stopped* ²	Name of Active Ingredient	Background
Bronchoscopy	Takelda Combination Tablets	Aspirin/ Lansoprazole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outpatient attending physician overlooked the medical history form The resident thought that Takelda Combination Tablets were a stomach medicine
Examination for ureterolithiasis			The physician had heard that the patient was not taking any drugs, but discovered on the day of admission that the patient did have oral medication
Examination for lung cancer	Rocornal	Trapidil	The drug was not in the hospital's formulary, so the physician did not notice that it had an antiplatelet effect
Mastectomy, sentinel lymph node biopsy	Lotriga	Omega-3-acid ethyl esters	
Neurosurgical procedure	Plavix tablets	Clopidogrel	Physician forgot to issue order to stop
Tonsillectomy	Persantin Tablets	Dipyridamole	
Aortic valve replacement	Aspirin	Aspirin	The patient was taking Warfarin and Aspirin, but the physician only issued an order to stop the Warfarin

*1 These are cases in which the procedure was invasive or presumed to be invasive.

*2 These are drugs that the medical institution has ruled must be stopped before an invasive procedure. Specifications and trade names have been omitted.

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Case 1

The patient was due to undergo a bronchoscopic biopsy as lung cancer was suspected. The outpatient attending physician did not notice that "Taking antiplatelet drug" had been circled on the medical history form, so did not stop the Takelda Combination Tablets. At the time of admission, the resident thought that Takelda Combination Tablets were a stomach medicine. The remarks column for Takelda Combination Tablets on the Current Medications Report stated "Aspirin Seven-day drug holiday required," but the resident overlooked this and did not stop the drug. On the day of the examination, upon checking with the patient whether they were taking any antiplatelet drugs, the examination room nurse discovered that the patient was taking Takelda Combination Tablets and halted the examination.

Case 2

The list of drugs subject to a perioperative drug holiday at the hospital recommended a seven-day pre-operative drug holiday for drugs containing eicosapentaenoic acid. The list specified only drugs in the hospital's formulary and did not mention Lotriga. The physician did not notice that Lotriga was a drug that they should consider stopping before surgery. After the patient was admitted for a mastectomy, the pharmaceutical department pointed out the day before the operation that a one-week drug holiday was recommended for Lotriga. Surgery was postponed, following consideration of the risk of hemorrhage.

Preventive measures taken at the medical institutions in which the events occurred

- Include the names of active ingredients in drugs subject to a drug holiday before an operation or examination on the list and ensure that it is circulated within the hospital.
- When planning an operation or examination, ascertain the patient's oral medications and check whether any of the drugs should be stopped.

* As part of the Project to Collect Medical Near-Miss/Adverse Event Information (a Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare grant project), this medical safety information was prepared based on the cases collected in the Project as well as on opinions of the "Comprehensive Evaluation Panel" to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of medical adverse events. See the Project website for details.
<http://www.med-safe.jp/>

* Accuracy of information was ensured at the time of preparation but cannot be guaranteed in the future.

* This information is intended neither to limit the discretion of healthcare providers nor to impose certain obligations or responsibilities on them.

