

# Can Regional Anesthesia Coexist with DVT Prophylaxis?

**Terese T. Horlocker, MD**

Professor of Anesthesiology and Orthopedics  
Mayo Clinic  
Rochester, MN

The actual incidence of neurologic dysfunction resulting from hemorrhagic complications associated with neuraxial blockade is unknown; however, the incidence cited in the literature is estimated to be less than 1 in 150,000 epidural and less than 1 in 220,000 spinal anesthetics<sup>1,2</sup> (Table 1). In a review of the literature between 1906 and 1994, Vandermeulen et al.<sup>3</sup> reported 61 cases of spinal hematoma associated with epidural or spinal anesthesia. In 87% of patients, a hemostatic abnormality or traumatic/difficult needle placement was present. More than one risk factor was present in 20 of 61 cases. Importantly, although only 38% of patients had partial or good neurologic recovery, spinal cord ischemia tended to be reversible in patients who underwent laminectomy within eight hours of onset of neurologic dysfunction.

The need for prompt diagnosis and intervention in the event of a spinal hematoma was also demonstrated in a recent review of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) Closed Claims database, which noted that spinal cord injuries were the leading cause of claims in the 1990's.<sup>4</sup> Spinal hematomas accounted for nearly half of the spinal cord injuries. Risk factors for spinal hematoma included epidural anesthesia in the presence of intravenous heparin during a vascular surgical or diagnostic procedure. Importantly, the presence of postoperative numbness or weakness was typically attributed to local anesthetic effect rather than spinal cord ischemia, which delayed the diagnosis. Patient care was rarely judged to have met standards (1 of 13 cases) and the median payment was very high.

It is impossible to conclusively determine risk factors for the development of spinal hematoma in patients undergoing neuraxial blockade solely through review of the case series, which represent only patients with the complication and do not define those who underwent uneventful neuraxial analgesia. However, large inclusive surveys that evaluate the frequencies of complications (including spinal hematoma), as well as identify subgroups of patients with higher or lower risk, enhance risk stratification. Moen et al.<sup>5</sup> investigated serious neurologic complications among 1,260,000 spinal and 450,000 epidural blocks performed in Sweden over a ten-year period. Among the 33 spinal hematomas, 24 occurred in females; 25 were associated with an epidural technique. The methodology allowed for calculation of frequency of spinal hematoma among patient populations. For example, the risk associated with epidural analgesia in women undergoing

childbirth was significantly less (1 in 200,000) than that in elderly women undergoing knee arthroplasty (1 in 3600,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Likewise, women undergoing hip fracture surgery under spinal anesthesia had an increased risk of spinal hematoma (1 in 22,000) compared to all patients undergoing spinal anesthesia (1 in 480,000).

Overall, these series suggest that the risk of clinically significant bleeding varies with age (and associated abnormalities of the spinal cord or vertebral column), the presence of an underlying coagulopathy, difficulty during needle placement, and an indwelling neuraxial catheter during sustained anticoagulation (particularly with standard heparin or LMWH); perhaps in a multifactorial manner. They also consistently demonstrate the need for prompt diagnosis and intervention.

## ORAL ANTICOAGULANTS

Few data exist regarding the risk of spinal hematoma in patients with indwelling epidural catheters who are anticoagulated with warfarin. The optimal duration of an indwelling catheter and the timing of its removal also remain controversial. To date, only three studies have evaluated the risk of spinal hematoma in patients with indwelling spinal or epidural catheters who receive oral anticoagulants perioperatively. Odoom and Sih<sup>6</sup> performed 1000 continuous lumbar epidural anesthetics in vascular surgical patients who were receiving oral anticoagulants preoperatively. The thrombotest (a test measuring factor IX activity) was decreased in all patients prior to needle placement. Heparin was also administered intraoperatively. Epidural catheters remained in place for 48 hours postoperatively. There were no neurologic complications. While these results are reassuring, the obsolescence of the thrombotest as a measure of anticoagulation combined with the unknown coagulation status of the patients at the time of catheter removal limit the usefulness of these results. Therefore, except in extraordinary circumstances, spinal or epidural needle/catheter placement and removal should not be performed in fully anticoagulated patients.

There were also no symptomatic spinal hematomas in 192 patients receiving postoperative epidural analgesia in conjunction with low-dose warfarin after total knee arthroplasty. Patients received warfarin, starting on the postoperative day, to prolong the PT to 15.0-17.3 s (normal 10.9-12.8 s), corresponding to an INR of 2.0-3.0. Epidural catheters were left indwelling  $37 \pm 15$  h

(range 13-96 h). Mean PT at the time of epidural catheter removal was  $13.4 \pm 2$  s (range 10.6-25.8 s). This study documents the relative safety of low-dose warfarin anticoagulation in patients with an indwelling epidural catheter. It also demonstrates the large variability in patient response to warfarin. The authors recommended close monitoring of coagulation status to avoid excessive prolongation of the PT during epidural catheterization.<sup>7</sup>

Wu and Perkins<sup>8</sup> retrospectively reviewed the medical records of 459 patients who underwent orthopedic surgical procedures under spinal or epidural anesthesia, including 412 patients who received postoperative epidural analgesia. Prothrombin time at the time of epidural catheter removal was  $14.1 \pm 3.2$  s (normal 9.6-11.1 s), corresponding to an INR of 1.4. Patients who had warfarin thromboprophylaxis initiated preoperatively had significantly higher PTs at the time of catheter removal than patients who had received postoperative warfarin.

### REGIONAL ANESTHETIC MANAGEMENT OF THE PATIENT ON ORAL ANTICOAGULANTS\*

Anesthetic management of patients anticoagulated perioperatively with warfarin is dependent on dosage and timing of initiation of therapy. Since factor VII has a relatively short half-life, prolongation of the PT and INR may occur in 24-36 hours after initiation of warfarin therapy. The PT will be prolonged (outside of normal range) when factor VII activity is reduced to approximately 55% of baseline. However, the therapeutic effect of warfarin anticoagulation is most dependent on reduction in factors II and X activity. Since these factors have circulating half-lives of 36-48 and 72-96 hours respectively, thromboprophylaxis is not adequate for 3-5 days after starting warfarin therapy.

Many orthopedic surgeons administer the first dose of warfarin the night before surgery. For these patients, the PT and INR should be checked prior to neuraxial block if the first dose was given more than 24 hours earlier, or a second dose of oral anticoagulant has been administered. Patients receiving low dose warfarin therapy during epidural analgesia should have their PT and INR monitored on a daily basis, and checked before catheter removal, if initial dose of warfarin was more than 36 hours beforehand. Reduced doses of warfarin should be given to patients who are likely to have an enhanced response to the drug. In general, it is recommended that indwelling neuraxial catheters be removed when the INR < 1.5 in order to assure adequate levels of all vitamin-K dependent factors. An INR > 3 should prompt the physician to withhold or reduce the warfarin dose in patients with indwelling neuraxial catheters. There is no definitive recommendation for removal of neuraxial catheters in patients with therapeutic levels of anticoagulation during a neuraxial catheter infusion.

The PT and INR of patients on chronic oral anticoagulation will require three to five days to normalize after warfarin discontinuation. Theoretically, since the PT and INR reflect predominantly factor VII activity, (and factor VII has only a six to eight hour half-life), there may be an interval during which the PT and INR approach normal values, yet factors II and X levels may not be adequate for normal hemostasis. Adequate levels of all vitamin K-dependent factors are typically present when the INR is in the normal range. Therefore, it is recommended that documentation of the patient's normal coagulation status be achieved prior to implementation of neuraxial block.

### INTRAVENOUS AND SUBCUTANEOUS STANDARD HEPARIN

Complete systemic heparinization is typically reserved for the most high-risk patients, typically patients with an acute thromboembolism. However, intraoperative administration of a modest intravenous dose is occasionally performed during vascular or orthopedic procedures. In a study involving over 4000 patients, Rao and El-Etr<sup>9</sup> demonstrated the safety of indwelling spinal and epidural catheters during systemic heparinization. However, the heparin activity was closely monitored, the indwelling catheters were removed at a time when circulating heparin levels were relatively low, and patients with a preexisting coagulation disorder were excluded. A subsequent study in the neurologic literature by Ruff and Dougherty<sup>10</sup> reported spinal hematomas in 7 of 342 patients (2%) who underwent a diagnostic lumbar puncture and subsequent heparinization. Traumatic needle placement, initiation of anticoagulation within 1 hour of lumbar puncture or concomitant aspirin therapy were identified as risk factors in the development of spinal hematoma in anticoagulated patients. Overall, large published series and extensive clinical experience suggests the use of regional techniques during systemic heparinization does not appear to represent a significant risk. However, the recent reports of paralysis relating to spinal hematoma in the ASA Closed Claims database suggests that these events may not be as rare as suspected and that extreme vigilance is necessary to diagnose and intervene as early as possible, should spinal hematoma be suspected.<sup>11</sup>

The use of epidural and spinal anesthesia and analgesia in the presence of high dose intraoperative systemic heparin, specifically in cardiac surgery has gained recent popularity. In a recent survey of the membership of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, Goldstein et al surveyed 3974 cardiac anesthesiologists, and found 7% of their responders used spinal or epidural techniques for cardiac surgery.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, the majority of anesthesiologists would proceed if frank blood was noted in the spinal or epidural needle. To date there

are no case reports of spinal hematomas associated with this technique published or within the Closed Claims Project.<sup>11</sup> Ho et al calculated the risk of hematoma among these patients. In a complex mathematical analysis of the probability of predicting a rare event that has not occurred yet, they estimate the probability of an epidural hematoma (based on the totals of 4,583 epidural and 10,840 spinal anesthetics reported without complications) to be in the neighborhood of 1:1,528 for epidural injection, and 1:3,610 for spinal technique.<sup>13</sup>

Low-dose subcutaneous standard (unfractionated) heparin is administered for thromboprophylaxis in patients undergoing major thoracoabdominal surgery and in patients at increased risk of hemorrhage with oral anticoagulant or LMWH therapy. As previously mentioned, subcutaneous heparin does not provide adequate prophylaxis following major orthopedic surgery, and is seldom utilized in this patient population. A review of the literature by Liu and Mulroy<sup>14</sup> noted no spinal hematomas in over 9000 patients who received subcutaneous heparin in combination with spinal or epidural anesthesia. There are only three cases of spinal hematoma associated with neuraxial blockade in the presence of low-dose heparin, two of which involved a continuous epidural anesthetic technique.<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that while the ACCP guidelines are more often recommending thrice daily dosing of subcutaneous heparin (due to patient co-morbidities and increased risk of thromboembolism), the safety of neuraxial block in these patients is unknown<sup>15</sup> (Table 2).

### **REGIONAL ANESTHETIC MANAGEMENT OF THE PATIENT RECEIVING STANDARD HEPARIN\***

The safety of neuraxial techniques in combination with intraoperative heparinization is well documented, providing no other coagulopathy is present. The concurrent use of medications that affect other components of the clotting mechanisms may increase the risk of bleeding complications for patients receiving standard heparin. These medications include antiplatelet medications, LMWH, and oral anticoagulants.

Intravenous heparin administration should be delayed for 1 hour after needle placement. Indwelling catheters should be removed 1 hour before a subsequent heparin administration or 2-4 hours after the last heparin dose. Evaluation of the coagulation status may be appropriate prior to catheter removal in patients who have demonstrated enhanced response or are on higher doses of heparin. Although the occurrence of a bloody or difficult needle placement may increase risk, there are no data to support mandatory cancellation of a case should this occur. If the decision is made to proceed, full discussion with the surgeon and careful postoperative monitoring are warranted.

Prolonged therapeutic anticoagulation appears to increase risk of spinal hematoma formation, especially if combined with other anticoagulants or thrombolytics. Therefore, neuraxial blocks should be avoided in this clinical setting. If systematic anticoagulation therapy is begun with an epidural catheter in place, it is recommended to delay catheter removal for 2-4 hours following heparin discontinuation and after evaluation of coagulation status.

There is no contradiction to use of neuraxial techniques during subcutaneous standard heparin  $\leq 10,000$  U/d. However, higher doses are associated with increased medical and surgical bleeding and may also increase the risk of spinal hematoma. Thus, the combination of neuraxial catheters with 5000 U TID or 7500 U BID dosing should be undertaken with care. The risk of neuraxial bleeding may be reduced by delay of the heparin injection until after the block, and may be increased in debilitated patients or after prolonged therapy. A platelet count is indicated for patients receiving subcutaneous heparin for greater than 5 days.

### **LOW MOLECULAR WEIGHT HEPARIN**

Enoxaparin, the first LMWH to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the United States, was distributed for general use in May 1993. Within one year, two cases of spinal hematoma had been voluntarily reported through the MedWatch system. Despite repeated efforts at relabeling and education, cases of spinal hematoma continued to occur. A total of 30 cases of spinal hematoma in patients undergoing spinal or epidural anesthesia while receiving LMWH perioperatively were reported between May 1993 and November 1997. An FDA Health Advisory was issued in December 1997. In addition, the manufacturers of all LMWH and heparinoids were requested to place a black "boxed warning".

At the time of the Consensus Conference on Neuraxial Anesthesia and Anticoagulation on April 1998, there were 45 cases of spinal hematoma associated with LMWH, 40 involved a neuraxial anesthetic. Severe radicular back pain was not the presenting symptom; most patients complained of new onset numbness, weakness, or bowel and bladder dysfunction. Median time interval between initiation of LMWH therapy and neurologic dysfunction was three days, while median time to onset of symptoms and laminectomy was over 24 hours. Less than one third of the patients reported fair or good neurologic recovery.<sup>16</sup>

The risk of spinal hematoma, based on LMWH sales, prevalence of neuraxial techniques and reported cases, was estimated to be approximately 1 in 3000 continuous epidural anesthetics compared to 1 in 40,000 spinal anesthetics.<sup>17</sup> However, this is most likely an underestimation- in addition to the spinal hematomas that had been reported at the

time of the First Consensus Conference, there were approximately 20 more that had occurred, but were not yet reported to the MedWatch system. In total, nearly 60 spinal hematomas were tallied by the FDA between 1993 and 1998 (Table 3).

There have been only 13 cases of spinal hematoma following neuraxial block between 1998 and 2002 (the timing of the second consensus conference) reported through the MedWatch system or published as case reports.<sup>18</sup> In addition to LMWH, five patients received ketorolac, one patient received ibuprofen, and one patient received intravenous unfractionated heparin during a vascular procedure. The regional technique was a spinal anesthetic in three cases. The remaining ten patients underwent epidural anesthesia in combination with LMWH therapy. Thus, the characteristics of the reported cases support the previous recommendations of epidural catheter removal prior to the initiation of LMWH thromboprophylaxis and avoidance of concomitant antiplatelet/anticoagulant medications. Although the number of cases voluntarily reported has markedly declined, this may be a result of decreased reporting, improved management, or simple avoidance of all neuraxial techniques in patients receiving LMWH. Continued monitoring is necessary.

The indications and labeled uses for LMWH continue to evolve. Indications for thromboprophylaxis as well as treatment of DVT/PE or MI have been introduced since the first Consensus Conference. These new applications and corresponding regional anesthetic management warrant discussion.<sup>15</sup> Several off-label applications of LMWH are of special interest to the anesthesiologist. LMWH has been demonstrated to be efficacious as a “bridge therapy” for patients chronically anticoagulated with warfarin, including parturients, patients with prosthetic cardiac valves, a history of atrial fibrillation, or preexisting hypercoagulable condition. The doses of LMWH are those associated with DVT treatment, not prophylaxis, and are much higher. Needle placement should occur a minimum of 24 hours following this level of LMWH anticoagulation.

#### **REGIONAL ANESTHETIC MANAGEMENT OF THE PATIENT RECEIVING LOW MOLECULAR WEIGHT HEPARIN\***

Perioperative management of patients receiving LMWH requires coordination and communication. It is also important to note that even when protocols for dosing of LMWH and catheter management exist, they may not be closely followed. McEvoy et al (McEvoy, 2000) reported a 52% noncompliance rate in the administration of LMWH in association with epidural analgesia. Clinicians are urged to develop protocols that “fit” within the normal practice standards at their institution, rather than deviate from the routine. Antiplatelet or oral anticoagulant medications administered in combination with LMWH increase the risk of spinal hematoma.

The presence of blood during needle and catheter placement does not necessitate postponement of surgery.

**Preoperative LMWH.** Patients on preoperative LMWH can be assumed to have altered coagulation. A single-injection spinal anesthetic may be the safest neuraxial technique in patients receiving preoperative LMWH for thromboprophylaxis. In these patients needle placement should occur at least 10-12 hours after the LMWH dose. Patients receiving treatment doses of LMWH will require delays of at least 24 hours. Neuraxial techniques should be avoided in patients administered a dose of LMWH two hours preoperatively (general surgery patients), because needle placement would occur during peak anticoagulant activity.

**Postoperative LMWH.** Patients with postoperative initiation of LMWH thromboprophylaxis may safely undergo single-injection and continuous catheter techniques. Management is based on total daily dose, timing of the first postoperative dose and dosing schedule. The first dose of LMWH should be administered no earlier than 24 hours postoperatively, regardless of anesthetic technique, and only in the presence of adequate hemostasis. Indwelling catheters should be removed prior to initiation of LMWH thromboprophylaxis. If a continuous technique is selected, the epidural catheter may be left indwelling overnight and removed the following day, with the first dose of LMWH administered two hours after catheter removal.

#### **ANTIPLATELET MEDICATIONS**

Antiplatelet medications are seldom used as primary agents of thromboprophylaxis. However, many orthopedic patients report chronic use of one or more antiplatelet drugs (Horlocker, 1995). Although Vandermeulen et al<sup>3</sup> implicated antiplatelet therapy in 3 of the 61 cases of spinal hematoma occurring after spinal or epidural anesthesia, several large studies have demonstrated the relative safety of neuraxial blockade in both obstetric, surgical and pain clinic patients receiving these medications.<sup>19-21</sup> In a prospective study involving 1000 patients, Horlocker et al<sup>20</sup> reported that preoperative antiplatelet therapy did not increase the incidence of blood present at the time of needle/catheter placement or removal, suggesting that trauma incurred during needle or catheter placement is neither increased nor sustained by these medications. The clinician should be aware of the possible increased risk of spinal hematoma in patients receiving antiplatelet medications who undergo subsequent heparinization. Ticlopidine and clopidogrel are also platelet aggregation inhibitors. These agents interfere with platelet-fibrinogen binding and subsequent platelet-platelet interactions. The effect is irreversible for the life of the platelet. Ticlopidine and clopidogrel have no effect on platelet cyclooxygenase, acting independently of aspirin. However, these

medications have not been tested in combination. Platelet dysfunction is present for 5-7 days after discontinuation of clopidogrel and 10-14 days with ticlopidine. Platelet glycoprotein IIb/IIIa receptor antagonists, including abciximab (Reopro®), eptifibatide (Integrilin®) and tirofiban (Aggrastat®), inhibit platelet aggregation by interfering with platelet-fibrinogen binding and subsequent platelet-platelet interactions. Time to normal platelet aggregation following discontinuation of therapy ranges from eight hours (eptifibatide, tirofiban) to 48 hours (abciximab). Increased perioperative bleeding in patients undergoing cardiac and vascular surgery after receiving ticlopidine, clopidogrel and glycoprotein IIb/IIIa antagonists<sup>22</sup> warrants concern regarding the risk of anesthesia-related hemorrhagic complications.

### REGIONAL ANESTHETIC MANAGEMENT OF THE PATIENT RECEIVING ANTIPLATELET MEDICATIONS\*

Antiplatelet drugs, by themselves, appear to represent no added significant risk for the development of spinal hematoma in patients having epidural or spinal anesthesia. However, the concurrent use of medications that affect other components of the clotting mechanisms, such as oral anticoagulants, standard heparin, and LMWH, may increase the risk of bleeding complications for patients receiving antiplatelet agents. Assessment of platelet function prior to performance of neuraxial block is not recommended. However, careful preoperative assessment of the patient to identify alterations of health that might contribute to bleeding is crucial.

The increase in perioperative bleeding in patients undergoing cardiac and vascular surgery after receiving ticlopidine, clopidogrel and platelet GP IIb/IIIa antagonists warrants concern regarding the risk of spinal hematoma. The recommended time interval between discontinuation of thienopyridine therapy and neuraxial blockade is 14 days for ticlopidine and 7 days for clopidogrel. For the platelet GP IIb/IIIa inhibitors, the duration ranges from eight hours for eptifibatide and tirofiban, to 48 hours following abciximab administration.

### HERBAL MEDICATIONS

There is a widespread use of herbal medications in surgical patients. Morbidity and mortality associated with herbal use may be more likely in the perioperative period because of the polypharmacy and physiological alterations that occur. Such complications include bleeding from garlic, ginkgo and ginseng, and potential interaction between ginseng-warfarin. Because the current regulatory mechanism for commercial herbal preparations sold in the United States does not adequately protect against unpredictable or undesirable pharmacological effects, it is especially important for anesthesiologists to be familiar with related

literature on herbal medications when caring for patients in the perioperative period.<sup>23</sup>

### REGIONAL ANESTHETIC MANAGEMENT OF THE PATIENT RECEIVING HERBAL THERAPY\*

Herbal drugs, by themselves, appear to represent no added significant risk for the development of spinal hematoma in patients having epidural or spinal anesthesia. This is an important observation since it is likely that a significant number of our surgical patients utilize alternative medications preoperatively and perhaps during their post-operative course. There is no wholly accepted test to assess adequacy of hemostasis in the patient reporting preoperative herbal medications. Careful preoperative assessment of the patient to identify alterations of health that might contribute to bleeding is crucial. Data on the combination of herbal therapy with other forms of anticoagulation are lacking. However, the concurrent use of other medications affecting clotting mechanisms may increase the risk of bleeding complications in these patients.

\*ALL MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM: Horlocker TT, Wedel DJ, Rowlingson JC, Enneking FK, Kopp SL, Benzon HT, Brown DL, Heit JA, Mulroy MF, Rosenquist RW, Tryba M, Yuan CS. Regional anesthesia in the patient receiving antithrombotic or thrombolytic therapy: American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine Evidence-Based Guidelines (Third Edition). *Reg Anesth Pain Med* 2010;35:64-101.

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**Table 1. Risk factors and estimated incidence for spinal hematoma and central neuraxial anesthesia**

	Relative Risk of spinal hematoma	Estimated incidence for epidural anesthesia	Estimated incidence for spinal anesthesia
<b>No heparin</b>			
Atraumatic	1.00	1:220,000	1:320,000
Traumatic	11.2	1:20,000	1:29,000
With aspirin	2.54	1:150,000	1:220,000
<b>Heparin following neuraxial procedure</b>			
Atraumatic	3.16	1:70,000	1:100,000
Traumatic	112	1:2,000	1:2,900
Heparin > 1 hr after puncture	2.18	1:100,000	1:150,000
Heparin < 1 hr after puncture	25.2	1:8,700	1:13,000
With aspirin	26	1:8,500	1:12,000

From Stafford-Smith. Impaired haemostasis and regional anaesthesia. Can J Anaesth 1996; 43:R129-412.

**Table 2. Levels of Thromboembolism Risk and Recommended Thromboprophylaxis in Hospital Patients (Section 1.3)**

Levels of Risk	Approximate DVT Risk Without Thromboprophylaxis (% †)	Suggested Thromboprophylaxis Options
<b>Low Risk</b> <10		
Minor surgery in mobile patients		No specific thromboprophylaxis
Medical patients who are fully mobile		Early and "aggressive" ambulation
<b>Moderate Risk</b> 10-40		
Most general, open gynecologic or urologic surgery patients		LMWH (at recommended doses), LDUH bid or tid, fondaparinux
Medical patients, bed rest or sick		
Moderate VTE risk plus high bleeding risk		Mechanical thromboprophylaxis §
<b>High Risk</b> 40-80		
Hip or knee arthroplasty, hip fracture surgery Major trauma, spinal cord injury		LMWH (at recommended doses), fondaparinux, oral vitamin K antagonist (INR 2-3)
High VTE risk plus high bleeding risk		Mechanical thromboprophylaxis §

†Rates based on objective diagnostic screening for asymptomatic DVT in patients not receiving thromboprophylaxis.

§Mechanical thromboprophylaxis includes intermittent pneumatic compression, venous foot pump and/or graduated compression stocking; consider switch to anticoagulant thromboprophylaxis when high bleeding risk decreases.

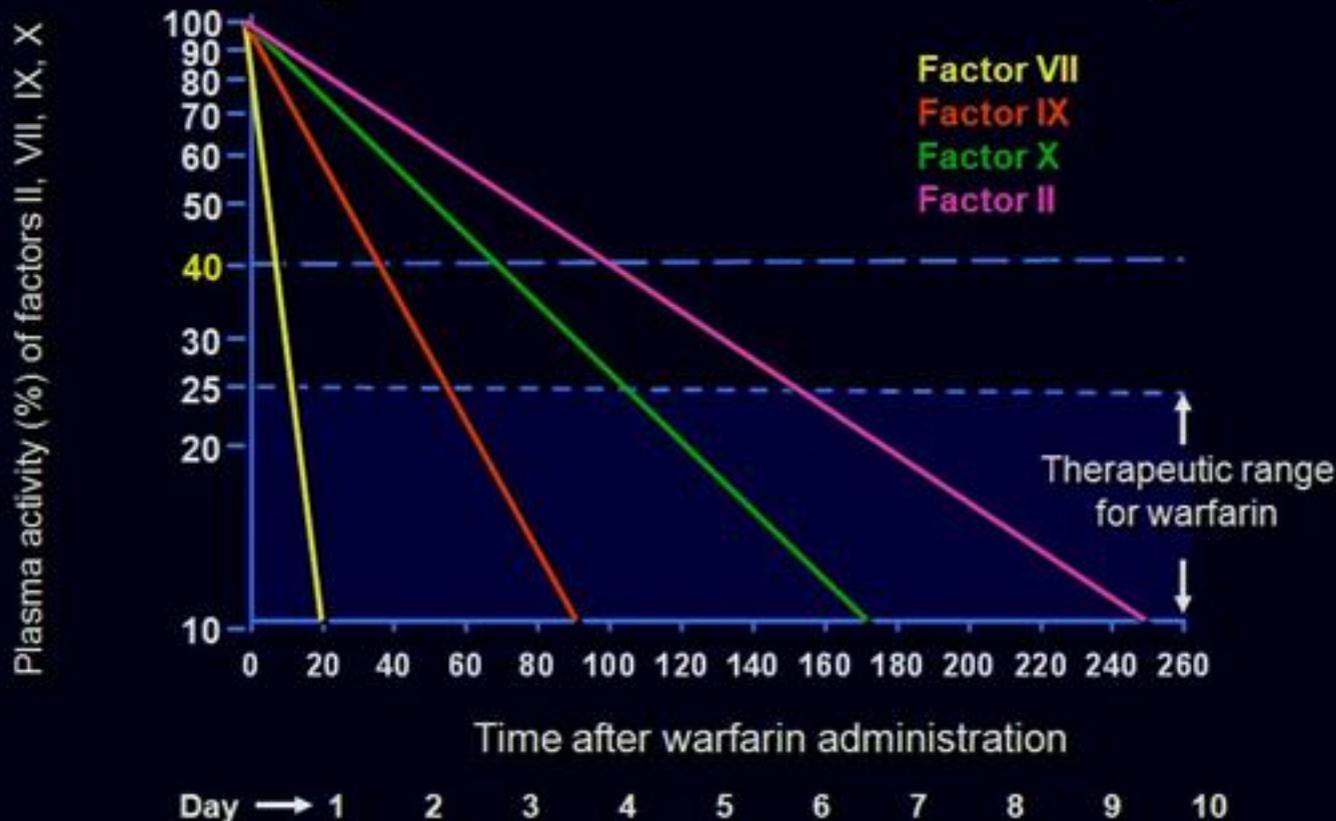
LMWH= low molecular weight heparin, LDUH=low dose unfractionated heparin, INR=international normalized ratio

From: Geerts et al<sup>15</sup>.

**Table 3. Patient, Anesthetic, and Low Molecular Weight Heparin (LMWH) Dosing Variables Associated with Spinal Hematoma**

<b>Patient factors</b>
Female gender
Increased age
Ankylosing spondylitis or spinal stenosis
Renal insufficiency
<b>Anesthetic factors</b>
Traumatic needle/catheter placement
Epidural (compared to spinal) technique
Indwelling epidural catheter during LMWH administration
<b>LMWH dosing factors</b>
Immediate preoperative (or intraoperative) LMWH administration
Early postoperative LMWH administration
Concomitant antiplatelet or anticoagulant medications
Twice daily LMWH administration

# Vitamin K-Dependent Factor Activities during Warfarin



Modified from Frank Kazmier PhD Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1955