Anticoagulant Adverse Drug Events (ADEs)

Definitions:

CDC: An adverse drug event (ADE) is when someone is harmed by a medicine.¹

CMS: An injury resulting from drug-related medical interventions.²

Quick Facts:

• It is generally estimated that about half of ADEs are preventable.³
• Antidiabetic meds, anticoagulants/antiplatelet meds and opioids account for more than 50% of ED visits for ADEs in Medicare patients.³
• Each year, ADEs account for nearly 700,000 ED visits and 100,000 hospitalizations.³

Common Effects of Anticoagulant ADEs²:

- Abrupt Onset Hypotension (Low Blood Pressure)
- Low Platelet Count, Elevated PT (Prothrombin Time)/INR (International Normalized Ratio), PTT (Partial Thromboplastin Time)
- Bruising, Nosebleeds, Bleeding Gums, Prolonged Bleeding from Wound, IV, or Surgical Sites
- Blood in Urine, Feces, or Vomit
- Pain or Tenderness and Swelling of Upper or Lower Extremity, Increased Armth, Edema and/or Erythema of Affected Extremity
- Feelings of Anxiety or Dread
- Unexplained Shortness of Breath, Chest Pain, Coughing, Coughing Up Blood, Hemoptysis (Expectoration of Blood from Some Part of the Respiratory Tract⁴)

Occurrences That Could Point to an Anticoagulant ADE²:

- Stat order for PT/INR, PTT, platelet count, or CBC (complete blood count)
- Abrupt stop order for medication
- Administration of Vitamin K
- Stat order for PT/INR
- Stat chest x-ray
- Stat scan for DVT (deep vein thrombosis)
- Transfer to hospital
- Removal of a medication
- Addition of a medication

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/medicationsafety/adult_adversedrugevents.html
³ https://psnet.ahrq.gov/primer/medication-errors-and-adverse-drug-events
⁴ https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hemoptysis#medicalDictionary