



Treatment for Von Willebrand Disease (VWD)

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Treatment is given by injection, nasal spray, or by mouth. The treatment for VWD depends on the type and severity of the bleeding disorder. For minor bleeds, treatment might not be needed.

The most commonly used treatments are:

Desmopressin acetate (DDAVP) injection: this medicine is injected into a vein.

- It is the synthetic form of a natural hormone in the body.
- It works by making the body release more von Willebrand factor (VWF) into the blood.
- It helps the body form a stable, strong clot and increases the level of factor VIII (8) in the blood.
- A **DDAVP challenge** may be done so that your doctor knows if it helps you.
 - VWF levels in the blood are checked before the medication is given, 1 hour after the injection and 3 hours after the injection.

Desmopressin acetate (DDAVP) nasal spray: this spray is the nasal form of the injection.

- Also known as **Stimate**.
- It is used to treat milder forms of VWD.
- It works by boosting the levels of VWF and factor VIII (8) in the blood.
- This medicine is used when your body responds to **DDAVP challenge** (i.e. increase VWF levels).
- The spray should not be used more than once a day or more than 2 days in a row as it is less effective the more that it is used for a bleeding episode.
- After using DDAVP, it is important to not drink too much fluid for 24 hours because the medicine can lead to fluid retention and abnormal electrolyte levels.

Factor replacement therapy: these clotting factor products are injected into a vein in the arm to replace the missing factor (VWF and factor VIII) in the blood.

- Plasma-derived clotting factor products are made from donated human blood (plasma).
- Used to treat more severe forms of VWD and the milder forms of VWD in people who do not respond well to DDAVP given either by nasal spray or injection.

Antifibrinolytic drugs (aminocaproic acid and tranexamic acid): they are either given in the vein or by mouth.

- These drugs help slow or prevent the breakdown of blood clots.

Hormone Therapy: the hormones in birth control can increase the levels of VWF and factor VIII (8) in the blood and reduce menstrual blood loss.