

HAS-BLED Diagnostic Tool For Assessment of Bleeding Risk

- A formal bleeding risk assessment is recommended for all patients with atrial fibrillation (AF).¹
- The HAS-BLED score (see table below) is a tool to assess bleeding risk in patients with AF that is designed to help clinicians identify and address any correctable risk factors for bleeding; for example, uncontrolled blood pressure, concomitant use of aspirin/non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), labile INRs (if already on warfarin), etc.
- Whilst a HAS-BLED score of 3 or more indicates a ‘high bleeding risk,’ the HAS-BLED score should **NOT** be used on its own to exclude AF patients from oral anticoagulation (OAC) therapy.¹⁻² See www.dontwaittoanticoagulate link for access to a personalised patient risk and benefit sheet to support decision making.



If a patient’s HAS BLED score is >CHA₂DS₂VASc score and initiation of oral anticoagulation is in doubt, consider contacting secondary care for advice.

Clinical Characteristics comprising the HAS-BLED bleeding risk score

Letter	Clinical Characteristic	Points Awarded
H	Hypertension - defined as systolic BP >160 mmHg	1
A	Abnormal renal and liver function (1 point each) - see definitions below ‘Abnormal kidney function’ is defined as the presence of chronic dialysis or renal transplantation or serum creatinine ≥200 micromol/L. ‘Abnormal liver function’ is defined as chronic hepatic disease (e.g. cirrhosis) or biochemical evidence of significant hepatic derangement (e.g. bilirubin >2 x upper limit of normal, in association with AST/ALT/ALP >3x upper limit normal).	1 or 2
S	Stroke	1
B	Bleeding - i.e. previous bleeding history or predisposition to bleeding, e.g. anaemia	1
L	Labile INRs - refers to unstable/high INRs or poor time in therapeutic range (i.e. INRs <65% time in therapeutic range).	1
E	Elderly (i.e. age >65)	1
D	Drugs or alcohol >8 units/week (1 point each) Drugs or alcohol use refers to concomitant use of drugs, such as antiplatelet agents, SSRIs, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or chronic alcohol use.	1 or 2

Maximum 9 points

References

1. NICE Guidance CG180 Management of Atrial Fibrillation June 2014; <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG180>
2. ESC Guidelines for the management of Atrial Fibrillation Focused Update 2012: <http://eurheartj.oxfordjournals.org/content/ehj/33/21/2719.full.pdf>