

Follow the important diet guidelines in this brochure to keep your blood levels of vitamin K stable.

Warfarin Sodium (Coumadin®)

Warfarin is a medication that prevents blood clots from forming in the blood. It is an anticoagulant also known as a “blood thinner.” Warfarin does not actually thin the blood, but it works to prevent new clots from forming or existing clots from getting bigger and causing more serious problems.

Warfarin does not dissolve clots that have already formed. It is used to prevent harmful clotting related to certain blood vessel, heart and lung conditions.

Doses, administration and blood testing

Your physician or pharmacist will use the results of blood tests known as an international normalized ratio (INR) and a prothrombin time (PT) to prescribe the correct dose of warfarin. These tests show how long it takes your blood to clot. If your clotting time is too high or low, your dose of warfarin will be changed. When you first start taking warfarin, a member of your care team will check your INR or PT often. This helps make sure you have a safe and effective dose.

Once your dose is set, you may not need your INR checked as often. But, it must still be checked on a regular basis. This helps make sure your dose is working properly. Too high of a dose may cause bleeding. Too low of a dose may not be enough to prevent blood clots from forming.

Take this medication only as directed by your physician.

- Take warfarin at the same time each day. Evening is usually best, but check with your physician or pharmacist. You can take warfarin with or without food.
- Take exactly the amount of warfarin prescribed. Do not take more or less.
- Do not take warfarin more often than your physician prescribed.
- Do not take warfarin for a longer time than your physician prescribed.

It is best to keep a record of each dose as you take it to avoid mistakes. Bring this to each physician or clinic visit.

Missed dose

If you miss a dose of warfarin, take it as soon as you remember unless it is close to your next dose. If it is close to your next dose, skip the missed dose and then keep your regular schedule. This way, you do not take a double or extra dose.

Always tell your physician or pharmacist about each missed dose.

Diet guidelines and vitamin K interactions

Foods with vitamin K can affect the way warfarin works. It is important to eat a healthy, consistent and balanced diet. Sudden changes in your diet, especially crash diets, fad diets and taking diet supplements, may change how much vitamin K is in your body. This may affect the way your body bleeds or clots.

Plan to eat the same types and amounts of foods that contain vitamin K on a regular basis. For example, if you usually eat 3 salads each week, then it is best to continue eating 3 salads each week. **A consistent diet is best.**

Try not to eat large amounts of foods that are high in vitamin K (see the list below). However, you do not need to remove all of these foods from your diet. Remember, consistency is key.

The table below lists some common food sources of vitamin K. If you eat a food from this list, try to eat the same amount of it each time. Substitute foods from this list with other foods containing a similar amount of vitamin K when you plan your meals. If you have any questions or change how often you eat these foods, contact your physician, nurse or pharmacist.

Food sources of vitamin K

Food	Amount	Micrograms (mcg) of vitamin K*	Level of vitamin K
Kale, cooked	1/2 cup	530	High
Spinach, cooked	1/2 cup	444	High
Spinach, raw	1/2 cup	94	High
Collard greens, cooked	1/2 cup	365	High
Mustard greens, cooked	1/2 cup	415	High
Turnip greens, cooked	1/2 cup	265	High
Parsley, raw	1/2 cup	492	High
Brussel sprouts, cooked	1/2 cup	150	High
Broccoli, cooked	1/2 cup	110	Medium
Broccoli, raw	1/2 cup	45	Medium
Lettuce, romaine, iceberg, raw	1 cup	48	Medium
Cabbage, cooked	1/2 cup	80	Medium
Pickles or cucumber	1 cup	75	Medium
Asparagus, cooked	1/2 cup	45	Medium
Kiwifruit	1/2 cup	36	Medium
Blackberries or blueberries, raw	1 cup	28	Medium
Grapes, red or green	1 cup	22	Medium
Peas, cooked	1/2 cup	20	Medium

*Values listed are for fresh produce; frozen or canned produce may slightly differ.

Beverages

Drinking too much alcohol may change the way warfarin works in your body. It is best not to drink alcohol. Please talk with your physician if you have questions about drinking alcohol.

Avoid drinking green tea, grapefruit juice and cranberry juice. These drinks can also work against warfarin.

Medication and herbal product interactions

Some antibiotics can increase or decrease the effect of warfarin. **Before taking any new antibiotics, please check with your physician or pharmacist about interactions with warfarin.**

Do not take warfarin with any other oral anticoagulants, such as apixaban (Eliquis®), rivaroxaban (Xarelto®), dabigatran etexilate (Pradaxa®) or edoxaban (Savaysa®). It can be taken with the injected blood thinner medication enoxaparin (Lovenox®) for short periods of time, as directed by your physician.

Some over-the-counter (OTC) medications can also increase or decrease the effect of warfarin. OTC medication is medication you can buy without a prescription. It is important to **talk to your physician or pharmacist before you use these products:**

- Any OTC medications.
- Herbal medications or supplements.
- Vitamins (many contain vitamin K). If you need to take vitamins, be sure to take them at the same time each day.
- Products containing vitamin A and vitamin E. Large amounts of these vitamins may affect warfarin.
- Ginkgo, ginseng, garlic tablets, St. John's wort, coenzyme Q10, fish oil, dong quai, feverfew, ginger, licorice, willow bark, wheatgrass and flaxseed oil.
- Aspirin or other pain medications known as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). If you buy a pain reliever, read the label ingredients and ask your physician, nurse or pharmacist for advice if you are not sure what it contains. A few common OTC medications to avoid are:

Aspirin-containing medications	NSAIDs
Alka-Seltzer®	Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®)
Anacin®	Naproxen sodium (Aleve®)
Bufferin®	
Ecotrin®	
Excedrin®	

- Cold or sinus medication, laxatives, or antacids. Aspirin or NSAIDs may be a hidden ingredient in these products.

However, there are some conditions that are best treated with both warfarin and aspirin. **Do not take both aspirin and warfarin unless your physician has told you to.**

Special instructions

- Do not take this medication if you are allergic to warfarin or any ingredients in warfarin (such as lactose, starch, magnesium stearate and certain food dyes).
- Do not start taking this medication during pregnancy. Do not become pregnant while taking it. This medication can cause birth defects. Talk with your physician if you plan to become pregnant.
- Do not change your weight by dieting without talking with your physician.
- If you will be traveling for any length of time, tell your physician.
- Tell all of your physicians, your dentist and your pharmacy that you are taking warfarin.

For your safety

Warfarin can increase your risk of bleeding. Be careful when doing activities that could cause injury.

- Tell your physician about any falls, blows to your body or head, or other injuries.
- Place a non-slip bath mat in the tub to prevent accidents.
- Be careful not to cut yourself. Use an electric shaver rather than a razor blade.
- If you cut yourself, apply pressure to the area for 5 minutes to make sure the bleeding has stopped.
- Take special care in brushing your teeth. Use a soft toothbrush. Floss gently.
- It is important to carry identification, such as a MedicAlert® bracelet, stating that you are taking this medication. This will help you get the right treatment in an emergency.

When to call your physician

Notify your physician right away if any of the following side effects happen:

Signs of bleeding:

- Bleeding from cuts or wounds that lasts
- Nosebleed
- Coughing up blood
- Blood in your urine or stool
- Black stool (if you are not taking iron supplements)
- Bleeding gums
- Unusual bruising or change in skin color
- Dizziness or faintness

- Stomach or intestinal upset
- Continuing headaches
- Unusually heavy menstrual bleeding

Signs of clotting:

- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling, pain, warmth and/or redness in the legs or arms
- Pain in your leg(s) when walking
- Signs or symptoms of stroke:
 - Numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on 1 side of the body
 - Facial drooping
 - Sudden confusion
 - Trouble speaking or understanding speech
 - Difficulty seeing

Less common side effects include fever, nausea and swelling in other parts of your body.

Please ask questions to make sure you understand how much medication to take and when to take it. Call your physician if you have any questions.

Storage and disposal

Keep this medication stored:

- In its original container and tightly closed
- Out of reach of children
- At room temperature
- Away from heat and direct light
- Away from damp places, including the bathroom

Dispose of leftover medication properly. This medication could be harmful to children, pets or others if taken by accident. To safely and securely dispose of leftover medication, return unused or unwanted medication to a collection site.

- Ask your local pharmacy if they take back this medication for disposal.
- Participate in take-back events. Call your city or county government's household trash and recycling service, and ask if a medication take-back program is available in your community.
- Look up local collection sites through the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) website: apps2.deadiversions.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/spring/main
- Call the DEA at 800.882.9539 to locate a disposal site near you.

If you cannot find an authorized collector, follow these steps to dispose of the medication:

1. Take the medication out of the original container.
2. Mix it with kitty litter, dirt or coffee grounds.
3. Place the mix in a sealable bag or container.
4. Throw it away in your household trash. Make sure to remove all personal information from the original container.