

Coumadin[®] (warfarin) Patient Information

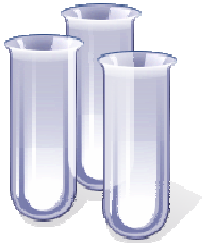
Coumadin[®] (warfarin) is an anticoagulant (blood thinning) medication. “Anti” means *against* and “coagulant” means *causing blood clotting*. So an anticoagulant is a drug that helps prevent clots from forming in the blood.

Why do I need warfarin?

Your doctor wants you to take warfarin because your body may make clots that you don't need. These clots can cause serious, even life-threatening, medical problems, such as stroke or breathing problems.

Blood Testing

When taking warfarin, it is important to have your blood tested to ensure that you are not getting too much or too little medication.

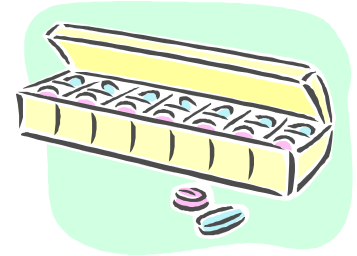


The blood test is called an INR. It measures how fast your blood clots. The higher the INR, the longer it takes for your blood to clot (blood is thinner). The INR helps your doctor decide the dose that will keep the balance between clotting and bleeding. Your doctor will set your target INR. For most patients the INR target is 2.0 – 3.0.

When you first start warfarin, you may have INR tests several times a week, then maybe only once a week. This is because your warfarin dose must be tailored to you. Once you are on a stable dose, your INR must still be tested at least once a month.

How to take warfarin

Take your warfarin as instructed at the same time every day. It can be taken with or without food. It is best to take it in the evening. A pill box can help you remember to take your medication and make sure you get the right dose.



Your warfarin tablet should look **EXACTLY** the same every time you pick it up at the pharmacy (unless your doctor changes your dose). Contact your pharmacy immediately if the pill looks different.

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible the **SAME** day. **DO NOT** double the dose the next day to make up for a missed dose.

Diet and Exercise

- Eat a sensible, well balanced diet.
- Foods that have a lot of vitamin K (see list below) can affect your warfarin. Do not avoid these foods. Try to keep the amount you eat stable from week to week.
- Talk to your doctor before make any major diet changes.
- Alcohol, tobacco and marijuana can all change how well your warfarin works. Using any can lead to more risk of clotting or bleeding. Be as truthful as possible when answering sensitive questions.
- Your doctor may want you to avoid activities or sports that may result in a fall or injury.

Warfarin Interactions

Many medications and dietary supplements can affect how your warfarin works. A few of these include:

- Prescription drugs
- Over-the-counter drugs such as pain medicines (aspirin, ibuprofen, Motrin naproxen, Aleve acetaminophen, Tylenol), cough and cold medicine
- Dietary and nutritional supplements, natural and herbal products, and herbal teas

BEFORE starting or stopping any medication or item listed above, talk to the doctor that monitors your warfarin.

Pregnancy, Surgery, Dental Work

- If you are a woman, tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant or are thinking about having a baby.
- If you need to stop your warfarin for surgery or a procedure, talk to your warfarin doctor first.
- Most dental work can be done safely while on warfarin. **Do NOT stop your warfarin.** Have your dentist discuss the dental work with your doctor.



Call Your Doctor

Bleeding is a serious side effect of warfarin. Possible signs and symptoms of bleeding are:

- Feeling more tired or weak than usual, looking pale
- Bleeding from cuts that won't stop after applying pressure for 15 minutes
- Bleeding from nose, gums or ears
- Coughing or throwing up blood (which may look like coffee grounds)
- Red or dark brown urine
- Red or black (tarry) stool
- Unusual bruising or bruises that appear without a cause or become swollen
- Menstrual bleeding that is heavier or longer than normal
- Unusual headache, dizziness or weakness

If you have any of these signs, call your doctor right away or call 911

Vitamin K in Food

Vitamin K affects your warfarin. It is important to keep the how much you eat the same from week to week. Many types of food contain vitamin K, but dark green leafy foods usually contain the most. Below is a list of foods and their level of vitamin K.

High:

Broccoli
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Collard greens
Endive (raw)
Green scallion (raw)
Kale (raw leaf)
Lettuce (bib, red leaf)
Mustard greens (raw)
Parsley (raw)
Spinach leaf (raw)
Swiss chard
Turnip greens (raw)
Water cress (raw)
Green tea
Mayonnaise
Canola oil
Soybean oil

Medium:

Asparagus
Avocado
Red Cabbage
Green peas
Dill pickle
Lettuce (iceberg)
Margarine
Olive oil

Other important information

- Call your doctor if you have symptoms of an illness such as vomiting, diarrhea, infection or fever.
- Always wear or carry identification that states you are taking warfarin
- Make sure anyone that helps care for you knows you are on warfarin

*Bring all your
medications to every
office visit!*

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