

When you're taking warfarin

Your doctor has prescribed warfarin (Coumadin) to help prevent or treat blood clots. You must follow your doctor's instructions carefully. New blood clots may form if you don't take enough warfarin. If you take too much, serious bleeding may occur.

You will need to visit your doctor regularly for blood tests. Your doctor will tell you how often this needs to be done. You may need to take more or less warfarin depending on the results from these tests.

Taking your medication

- Take the exact amount prescribed.
- Take your pill around the same time every day.
- Call your doctor if you forget to take warfarin for 1 day. Don't take extra pills to catch up.
- Never stop taking warfarin without your doctor's approval.

Diet

The foods you eat, especially those that contain vitamin K, may affect the way warfarin works. Beer, wine, and other drinks containing alcohol can also affect warfarin. Remember to

- Include about the same amount of vitamin K in your diet each day. The food list shows how much vitamin K many common foods contain.
- Avoid binge drinking. A small amount of alcohol (1 oz liquor, 4 oz wine, or 12 oz beer) may be safe. Talk to your doctor about how much alcohol you can drink.

Call your doctor if you:

- Have any bleeding that is not normal. Tell your doctor if your stool or urine is red or darker than usual; your gums or nose bleed; or you bruise more easily than usual. If you are a woman, also call your doctor if you have periods that are heavier or longer than usual or have vaginal bleeding between periods.
- Start any new medicine, including over-the-counter medicines.
- Are not able to eat or you eat less than usual because of gastrointestinal pain or decreased appetite.

- Have diarrhea, dizziness, weakness, or fainting spells.
- Become pregnant or plan to do so in the near future. Warfarin can harm your unborn child.

Also, be sure to:

- Tell your other doctors and dentists that you are taking warfarin.
- Discuss your physical activities with your doctor. Avoid contact sports, such as football, boxing, and hockey, where you can easily be injured.
- Try not to cut yourself. Wear gloves before doing any work that may cause bruising or cuts. Use an electric shaver instead of a razor.
- List warfarin and any other medicines you take on an emergency identification card and carry it in your purse or wallet.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist any questions you may have.



Vitamin K food list

These foods are high in vitamin K:

- Broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, chickpeas, green tea, lettuce, liver, spinach, and turnip greens

These foods have a moderate amount of vitamin K:

- Asparagus, avocado, cauliflower, cheese, coffee, and peas

These foods have little vitamin K:

- Bacon, beef, bread, butter, carrots, celery, chicken, corn, eggs, green beans, onions, peanuts, peppers, potatoes, pork, pumpkin, rice, and tomatoes