

CardioVascular
Institute



Beth Israel Deaconess
Medical Center



A teaching hospital of
Harvard Medical School

Warfarin: What Every Patient Should Know

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Warfarin or Coumadin™

- Dosing is based on a blood test called an INR (international normalized ratio)
- Goal INR range differs for each patient
- Your physician will inform you of your target range based on your medical history
- Amount of warfarin each person needs to maintain a consistent INR is different
- Take medication at the same time every day



Use of Other Medications

- Warfarin can be taken safely with other medications
- Concomitant use of certain medications can increase your risk of bleeding, speak to your doctor before taking:
 - Naproxen, Ibuprofen, Excedrin
 - Aspirin
 - Antibiotics



Dietary Modification

- Foods with high amounts of Vitamin K can affect how well warfarin works in your system
- Maintain consistent, well balanced diet
- Avoid sudden changes in diet
- Caution when traveling



Foods High in Vitamin K

- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Kale
- Lettuce (romaine)
- Mustard greens
- Spinach



Moderate Amount of Vitamin K

- Asparagus
- Canola oil
- Cauliflower
- Iceberg lettuce
- Okra
- Soybean oil
- Squash



Activity

- Regular exercise is encouraged
- Speak to your physician before engaging in contact sports (especially skiing)
- Caution with activities that may cause injury to the skin or blunt injury (power saw, chopping wood)



Prevent Injury

- Caution with shaving
- Use soft toothbrush
- Waxed dental floss
- Wear shoes to protect feet
- Take care when trimming toenails
- See a podiatrist for calluses or corns which require trimming
- Wear gloves



Miscellaneous

- Know which health care provider is responsible for managing your warfarin
- Speak to your physician if you plan to travel for an extended period
- Notify all of your health care providers that you are taking warfarin
- Notify your dentist that you are on warfarin prior to dental procedures



Lower Your Risk of Bleeding

- Take warfarin only as prescribed
- Have your blood test done on time
- Inform your provider of any changes in health or medications
- Call your provider if you have a significant fall or any head injury
- Speak to your provider prior to starting vitamins or herbal supplements



Questions and Answers

