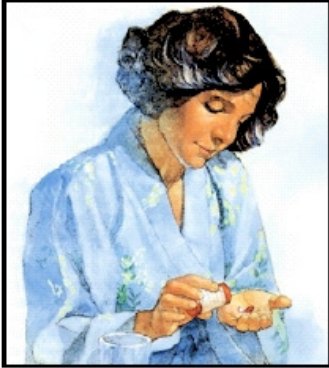


# Taking Coumadin

Coumadin (warfarin) helps keep your blood from clotting. Be sure to take it as directed. Because it keeps your blood from clotting, you also need to protect yourself from injury.



## Follow These Tips

- Take Coumadin at the same time each day. **If you miss a dose**, take it as soon as you remember—unless it's almost time for your next dose. If so, skip the missed dose. Do not take a double dose.
- Go for your blood (protime/INR) tests as often as directed.

My protime/INR is between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- Don't take any other medications without checking with your healthcare provider first. This includes aspirin, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- Tell all healthcare providers that you take Coumadin. It's also a good idea to carry a medical ID card or wear a medical-alert bracelet.
- Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.
- Don't go barefoot. And don't trim corns or calluses yourself.

## When to Call Your Healthcare Provider

Call your healthcare provider before you take your Coumadin if you have any of these problems:

- Bleeding that doesn't stop in 10 minutes
- A heavier-than-normal period or bleeding between periods
- Coughing or throwing up blood
- Diarrhea or bleeding hemorrhoids
- Dark urine or black stools
- Red or black-and-blue marks on the skin that get larger

- A fever or an illness that gets worse
- Dizziness or fatigue
- Chest pain or trouble breathing
- A serious fall or a blow to the head

## **Keep Your Diet Steady**

Keep your diet pretty much the same each day. That's because many foods contain vitamin K. Vitamin K helps your blood clot. So eating foods that contain vitamin K can affect the way Coumadin works. You don't need to avoid foods that have vitamin K. But you do need to keep the amount of them you eat steady (about the same day to day). If you change your diet for any reason, such as due to illness or to lose weight, be sure to tell your doctor.

- Examples of foods high in vitamin K are asparagus, avocado, broccoli, and cabbage. Oils, such as soybean, canola, and olive oils, are also high in vitamin K.
- Alcohol affects how your body uses Coumadin. Talk to your doctor about whether you should avoid alcohol while you're using Coumadin.
- Herbal teas that contain sweet clover, sweet woodruff, or tonka beans can interact with Coumadin. Keep the amount of herbal tea you use steady.