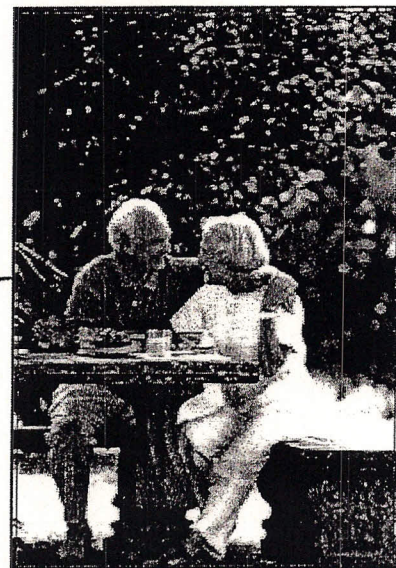


DIET GUIDELINES FOR ANTICOAGULANT THERAPY

Anticoagulant medicines such as Coumadin and warfarin are ordered by doctors to help prevent blood clots from forming. Vitamin K, a nutrient found in foods, can actually have the opposite effect on your blood. Since Vitamin K interacts with your medicine, the amount of medicine you receive each day is based on your current diet and usual intake of Vitamin K. Therefore, it is important to eat a consistent amount of Vitamin K each day.



Does this mean I have to follow a special diet?

- It is important to maintain a diet similar to your current eating pattern.
- Do not add foods high in vitamin K to your diet that you are not used to eating.
- You also do not want to suddenly avoid foods high in vitamin K that you are used to eating.
- Your doctor will monitor your INR/PT (International Normalized Ratio/Prothrombin Time) regularly to make sure your medicine is working properly. Your doctor may alter your diet guidelines based on the blood level results.

What foods contain Vitamin K?

It is recommended not to eat more than 1 serving per day of the following foods which are high in vitamin K.

Food	Serving Size
Kale, fresh, boiled	1/2 cup
Spinach, fresh, boiled	1/2 cup
Turnip greens, frozen, boiled	1/2 cup
Collard, fresh, boiled	1/2 cup
Swiss chard, fresh, boiled	1/2 cup
Parsley, raw	1/2 cup
Mustard greens, fresh, boiled	1/2 cup

It is recommended not to eat more than 3 servings per day of the following foods which are moderately high in Vitamin K.

Food	Serving Size
Brussel sprouts, frozen, boiled	1/2 cup
Spinach, raw	1 cup
Turnip greens, raw, chopped	1 cup
Green leaf lettuce, shredded	1 cup
Broccoli, raw chopped	1 cup
Endive lettuce, raw	1 cup
Romaine lettuce, raw	1 cup

Adapted from Drug-Nutrient Interactions Coumadin and Vitamin K. From the Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health. Bethesda, Maryland 20892. 12/2003

- Limiting or avoiding alcohol may be advised. If you do drink alcohol, you should consult with your doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you are taking any herbal or vitamin and mineral supplements.
- Ask to speak to a dietitian if you have questions about your diet while on anticoagulant therapy.

WARFARIN THERAPY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is warfarin?

Warfarin is an anticoagulant. This medicine thins your blood to reduce the risk of developing blood clots in your veins or arteries.

Why do I have to take it?

Warfarin helps prevent and treat clots in the legs and lungs. People who have an irregular heartbeat (atrial fibrillation) or heart valve replacement take it to prevent blood clots also.

How do I know if it is working?

Your doctor will order blood tests called an INR or Protime to measure how long it takes your blood to clot. The doctor sets a therapeutic goal for you. When below your goal you are at risk for clots, and when higher than goal, you are at risk for bleeding.

Are there side effects of warfarin therapy?

The most common side effect is minor bleeding, especially along the gum line when brushing your teeth. Call your doctor for:

- bruises that don't go away
- excessive bleeding
- red or black colored bowel movements
- vomiting that is red or coffee ground colored

How do I take warfarin?

You should take the prescribed dose of warfarin at the same time each day. We recommend 6:00 PM each day.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember if it is the same day. If you do not remember until the next day, skip the missed dose and call your doctor for instructions. **DO NOT DOUBLE YOUR DOSE!**

Who should know I take warfarin?

Tell all of your doctors, dentists, and pharmacists. Also remind them you are on warfarin if you start taking any new prescription or over the counter medicine.

How does my diet affect warfarin?

Foods high in Vitamin K can decrease how well warfarin works. Green, leafy vegetables, mayonnaise, and oils are high in Vitamin K. You do not have to cut these foods out of your diet, just remain consistent. Remember to eat the same number of servings each week.

Can I drink alcohol?

Talk to your doctor before drinking alcohol while you are on warfarin.

WARFARIN (COUMADIN) FLOWSHEET

THE FLOWSHEET BELOW IS FOR YOUR USE AT HOME. PLEASE KEEP ACCESSIBLE TO RECORD FOLLOW-UP LAB VALUES, CHANGES IN YOUR COUMADIN DOSE, AND WHEN THE NEXT BLOOD TEST IS DUE.

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