

Read this important information before taking:



Brought to you by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices

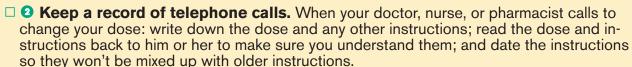
[Extra care is needed because warfarin is a high-alert medicine.]

High-alert medicines have been proven to be safe and effective. But these medicines can cause serious injury if a mistake happens while taking them. This means that it is very important for you to know about this medicine and take it exactly as directed.

When taking warfarin (blood thinner)

1 O Take exactly as directed. Take your medicine at the same time each day. Do not take extra doses or skip any doses.

When the doctor changes your dose



• Sknow your dose. Always tell your doctor the strength of warfarin tablets that you have on hand. Then ask him or her how much warfarin to take, and how many tablets in that strength to take to equal the dose. If you are running low on tablets, ask for a new prescription.



Top 10 List of Safety Tips for Warfarin

• **Keep instructions nearby.** Keep the dated instructions near the medicine, and read them every time before taking your warfarin.

test, call him or her if you don't hear anything within 24 hours of the test to find out your new dose or when to restart your prior dose.

To avoid serious side effects



• **Solution Seep to your regular habits.** Keep your eating habits and exercise regular. Know the foods high in vitamin K to avoid or eat consistently (see other side of this page). Tell your doctor if there has been a recent change in your level of exercise, diet, or how often you smoke.



7 Take precautions. Because serious bleeding can occur, take precautions. Use an electric razor, avoid sharp objects, and keep away from fall risks (climbing ladders, for example).



Call your doctor for your test results if you are not contacted within 24 hours of the test.

When you should call your doctor



Signs of bleeding or clot. Call your doctor immediately if you experience any signs of bleeding or clot formation, which are listed on the other side of this page.

10 New medicines. Do not start or stop any prescription or nonprescription medicines, herbals, or vitamins without telling your doctor. Common nonprescription medicines to avoid can be found on the other side of this page in the **Fast Facts** table.

Warfarin tablets may come in different shapes. But each strength comes in just one color. Make sure the color of your tablets matches the strength your doctor prescribed.



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<u>Warfarin</u>

Report these signs to your doctor right away!

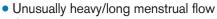
Too little, too much!

Too little warfarin can cause a blood clot, too much can lead to bleeding



Signs of bleeding

- Unusual pain, swelling, discomfort (may also be a sign of a clot)
- Unusual or easy bruising
- Pink or brown urine
- Prolonged bleeding of gums or cuts
- Repeated nosebleeds that don't
- stop within 7 minutes



- Coughing up blood
- Vomit that is bloody or looks like coffee arounds
- Feeling very dizzy, weak, faint, tired
- Bad headache
- Bloody or black poop
- Pain in joints or back



Some foods high in vitamin K

Do not eat

Cranberries/cranberry juice

Eat the same amouont of foods t have high vitamin K day to day

- Beef or pork liver
- Green tea
- Parsley, basil, thyme
- Chickpeas
- Green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, kale, turnip greens, Swiss chard, cabbage
- Broccoli and Brussels sprouts
- Many cooking oils
- o For more information: www.ismp.org/ext/650

Signs of a clot

- In the lung: chest pain, fast heart rate, coughing, shortness of breath, fever
- In the arm or leg: sudden leg, arm, or back pain, swelling, redness, warmth, soreness • In the brain: headache, vision changes, seizure, slurred speech, weakness on one
- side of body, dizziness
- In the heart: chest pain, shortness of breath, sweating, nausea and vomiting
- In the abdomen: abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea

Topics	Fast Facts
Generic name	warfarin (pronounced WAR far in) (generic available)
Common brand names	Coumadin and Jantoven
Common uses	 Prevent and treat blood clots in certain conditions that increase the risk of clots, such as: surgery, heart attack, heart rhythm problem, heart valve replacement, immobility after an accident Prevent transient ischemic attacks (mini strokes, short episodes of low oxygen to the brain)
Normal dose	 Up to 10 mg daily for adult patients. Your dose may be based on a lab test that shows how sensitive you are to the medicine Doses are changed from time to time based on INR blood test results
What to do if you miss a dose	 If it is still the same day, take the dose as soon as you remember it If it is the next day, skip the missed dose and take your normal dose Do not take two doses to catch up Call your doctor if you miss two or more doses in a row
Special instructions and precautions	 Take exactly as prescribed. Take at the same time each day Do not drink alcohol. Keep eating habits and exercise regular You may start bleeding easily. Use a soft toothbrush, waxed dental floss, electric razor. Do not use sharp objects. Be careful with fall risks, like climbing a ladder Do not start or stop any medicine without talking to your doctor or pharmacist. These include medicines with no prescription, herbals, and vitamins
Safety during pregnancy/breastfeeding	 Do not take when pregnant. It may cause fetal bleeding or abnormalities May take while breastfeeding. Let the infant's doctor know for proper monitoring
Tell your doctor if you have:	 Diseases: bleeding disorders, kidney disease, liver disease, thyroid disease, severe high blood pressure, diabetes Conditions: surgery, history of falls or if you are at risk for falls, open wound
Storage and how to throw away	 Keep at room temperature, protect from light and moisture (do not keep in bathroom) Throw away tablets securely in the trash; do not flush down the toilet
Side effects to report to your doctor right away	Signs of bleeding or clot (see top of page), skin irritation, painful red-purple patches on skin (toe, breast, abdomen), unusual fever, unhealed wounds, yellow eyes or skin
Other conditions to report to your doctor	Accidents or falls (even if you feel fine), new or stopped medicines (including antibiotics, medicines with no prescription, herbals, vitamins), changes in smoking/eating habits, infection
Nonprescription medicines/herbals/vitamins that should not be taken with warfarin	■ Aspirin (unless prescribed by your doctor), nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (ibuprofen [Advil, Motrin], naproxen [Aleve]), most herbals (particularly cranberry, fenu-greek, garlic, ginkgo biloba, glucosamine, American ginseng, ginger, goldenseal, coen-zyme Q10, St. John's wort, alfalfa, anise, bilberry), cimetidine (Tagamet), vitamins A or E
Prescription medicines you should not take with warfarin	 Check with your doctor, as many prescription medicines interact with warfarin Tell your doctor and pharmacist about <u>all</u> the medicines you take
Special tests your doctor may prescribe	 You must have blood tests (called INR) checked regularly Your doctor will decide the right INR level (usually between 2 and 3.5) for you

This information does not replace the need to follow your doctor's instructions. Read the medicine drug information leaflet provided with your prescription.

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