

CARDIAC CARE

Blood Thinning Medications and Your Heart



Blood-thinning medications, or anticoagulants, make it harder for your blood to form clots. Clots can be harmful if they travel to your heart, lungs or brain. Your doctor may prescribe a blood thinner for:

- A damaged or artificial heart valve.
- Blockages in blood vessels of the heart.
- An irregular heartbeat.
- Narrowing of blood vessels in your legs.

Medications come in many forms.

PILL FORMS

Coumadin,
Warfarin

INJECTIONS

Heparin,
Lovenox

Your doctor can give you Vitamin K to stop bleeding when injuries occur. Always follow your doctor's instructions and ask questions.

Your family and friends need to know that you are taking blood-thinning medicine. Always carry a

list of your medicines, dosages and your doctor's and family's phone numbers with you. Keep this in your wallet or purse so others can get to it easily. They will be able to tell a doctor about your medicine if you are not able to. Some things can stop your blood-thinning medicine from working. Make sure you ask your doctor about:

- Aspirin products
- Cold remedies
- Certain vitamins
- Sleeping pills
- Antibiotics
- Alcohol & tobacco
- Green leafy vegetables
- Strawberries

CALL YOUR DOCTOR:

Call your doctor immediately if you notice:

- Red or dark brown urine.
- Red, dark brown or black bowel movements.
- Sudden and severe stomach pain.

- Headaches that last for a long time.
- Bleeding from your gums.
- Heavier-than-normal menstrual bleeding.
- You may be pregnant.
- Bruises without an injury.
- Sudden & severe back pain.
- Accident that results in injury, fall or blow to the head.

LAB TESTING:

Your doctor may need to test your blood often. Everyone reacts differently to blood-thinning medicine. These blood tests can be affected by other medications you are taking, your diet or how active you are. Your doctor may need to change your dosage based on these results.

DENTIST:

Let your dentist know you are taking a blood-thinning medication!



FOR MORE INFORMATION about cardiac health, call Care Management 1.800.414.6641 (TTY: 1.800.473.0989).

