



## Warfarin Patient Information

### What is Warfarin?

- Warfarin is an anticoagulant, a medication that works to keep your blood from forming harmful blood clots.
- This medication is sometimes referred to as a blood thinner. The brand name of Warfarin is Coumadin.®
- Warfarin will:
  - Reduce your blood's ability to form blood clots
  - Help your blood flow more easily
  - Keep existing clots from getting larger

### Why Do I Need Warfarin?

Some of the most common reasons for taking warfarin are:

- To prevent strokes associated with atrial fibrillation, an irregular heart rhythm
- To prevent strokes associated with heart valve replacement
- Deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a potentially harmful blood clot commonly found in the leg or arm
- Pulmonary embolism (PE), a blood clot in the lung

### Will I Need Blood Tests?

Yes. Warfarin requires periodic blood tests to monitor its effectiveness. The frequency of blood testing can vary and will be determined by your doctor or health care team. Because of the dangers that can be associated with warfarin use, it is very important to have your blood tested on the date and time that is recommended by your doctor.

### What Should I Watch For?

- Watch for signs or symptoms of bleeding such as: bleeding from your gums after brushing teeth, nosebleeds, unusual bruising, or blood in your urine or stool
- Use caution with daily activities that may increase your risk of trauma or falls (such as using knives and scissors, walking on icy walkways, or participating in certain sports or activities with a high risk of injury)
- Be consistent with the amount of high vitamin K-containing foods that you eat (most dark green, leafy vegetables and some meal replacement shakes are high in vitamin K)
- Inform your doctor or health care team any time you have changes in your other medications (this includes daily medications, antibiotics, and any herbals or vitamins)
- Be sure to inform other health care providers that you take warfarin (surgeons, dentists, dermatologists, etc.)

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