



National Blood Clot Alliance
Stop The Clot®

Living Your Best Life While Taking Blood Thinners

WHEN IT COMES TO FOOD, CONSISTENCY IS THE BEST INGREDIENT

Blood clots are very serious, even life threatening, because they may stop the flow of blood to the lungs, the heart, and the brain. Warfarin, also known as Coumadin®, is a medication that helps slow or prevent blood clots from forming.

When you take warfarin, it's very important to keep your diet consistent. A balanced, healthy diet is always recommended, of course, but you can eat what you normally enjoy as long as you do so consistently.

HEALTHY CHOICES

When a person learns that they have a blood clot, or that they are at risk for developing a blood clot, they may begin to make healthier choices in their life, including a change to a healthier diet. It's okay to make the change to a healthier diet, as long as you work with your healthcare provider to monitor your INR and to make sure that you are becoming consistent with your diet.



Some of the healthiest foods that you can eat, including foods like broccoli and spinach, are high in vitamin K. You might read or be told that you need to be aware of your vitamin K intake, because vitamin K can interfere with how warfarin works or make it less effective. It's always very important to understand how different things, like food, might affect how your medication works. However, if you eat these very healthy

foods that are rich in vitamin K consistently – in the same amounts over time with no sudden changes – you can enjoy the wonderful nutritional benefits they provide as part of a healthy diet.

You should talk with your healthcare provider before making any changes in what you eat. You can also talk to a registered nutritionist to help make sure that your food intake is healthy and consistent. The United States Department of Agriculture has a nutrient database that provides information about vitamin K levels in many of the foods you might choose.

ALCOHOL

Alcoholic beverages, including hard liquor, beer or wine, also can

affect how warfarin works. Experts advise that, as with food, consistency is key here as well. You should avoid drinking too much at any one time and always avoid binge drinking.



HERBS AND SUPPLEMENTS

Herbs and dietary supplements, including vitamin and mineral supplements in both pill and liquid form, also may change the way warfarin works. The amount of vitamin K content in herbs and dietary supplements can vary a lot and be unknown. For this reason, experts recommend that you avoid taking herbs and supplements if you are taking warfarin.

TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

If you are taking warfarin, talk to your healthcare provider about what you are eating and also any herbs or dietary supplements you are taking. Your provider will monitor your INR closely to make sure that your blood thinner and your diet are working together in the best way for you.



REMEMBER: Consistency in what you eat is most important. Avoid abrupt and prolonged changes in your diet.

To learn more about the prevention and treatment of blood clots, and the safe use of blood thinner medications, contact the National Blood Clot Alliance at **877-4-NO-CLOT** or **www.stoptheclot.org**.

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National Blood Clot Alliance's (NBCA) Living Your Best Life While Taking Blood Thinners series is basic, and is not intended to be thorough or replace medical advice. NBCA recommends that you consult your doctor about blood clot risk, prevention and treatment.

NBCA thanks its Medical and Scientific Advisory Board for its counsel in preparing this information.

www.stoptheclot.org

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