



QUESTIONS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ANSWERS

Coumadin[®]/Warfarin and Vitamin K

Your doctor has started you on Coumadin (coo-ma-din)/Warfarin a medicine that **helps prevent blood clots**. It is used to prevent heart attacks, strokes, blood clots in the leg and lungs, and other problems from clots.

The body uses Vitamin K to naturally clot the blood to stop bleeding from cuts. You get the Vitamin K the body needs mostly from **green leafy vegetables**. Coumadin/ Warfarin and Vitamin K must be kept in balance in the blood so Coumadin/Warfarin can work correctly to keep the blood at its proper thickness.

Watch What You Eat

Because Vitamin K can change the way Coumadin/Warfarin works in your body; you need to watch how much Vitamin K rich foods you eat. The amount of Vitamin K in your blood needs to stay the same all the time. Do not make **sudden changes** in the amount of green leafy vegetables you eat. The recommended dietary intake of Vitamin K per day is 70-80 micrograms (mcg).

***Avoid High Vitamin K Foods**

(More than or equal to 160 mcg/serving)

- Greens cooked ½ cup
Includes collard, mustard, turnip and beet greens.
- Spinach cooked ½ cup
- Kale cooked ½ cup

***Limit Moderate Vitamin K Foods**

(Eat no more than 1 serving a day – 40-160 mcg/serving)

- Spinach, raw 1 cup
- Brussels sprouts, cooked ½ cup

- Endive, raw 1 cup
- Leaf lettuce, raw 1 cup
- Broccoli
 - Cooked ½ cup
 - Raw 1 cup
- Cabbage, cooked ½ cup
- Asparagus, cooked ½ cup

***Other Foods to watch while on Coumadin/Warfarin**

- **Alcohol**
 - Avoid alcohol as it can boost the effect of Coumadin/Warfarin. This could make it hard to stop bleeding from a cut. Ask your doctor about this.
- **Fruits to Limit**
 - Limit intake of mango, papaya and avocado.
 - Limit cranberry juice to no more than 16oz. per day.
- **Oil and Spreads**
 - Limit use of canola, olive, and soybean oils, margarine, salad dressing and mayonnaise to less than 6 tablespoons per day.
 - Note: corn, sunflower, safflower and peanut oils are low in Vitamin K so you do not need to limit.
- **Vitamin, Health Drinks and Herbs**
 - Most vitamin pills and health drinks, such as Boost or Ensure, have Vitamin K. Check with your doctor before you start or stop using them.
 - Many herbs can change the way Coumadin/Warfarin works. This could make clots more likely to happen. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about them.

Remember

Keep the amount of Vitamin K you eat **the same** each day. If you change what you eat, you may change the way Coumadin/Warfarin works in your body.

For more information, visit:

<http://dietary-supplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/cc/coumadin1.pdf>

<http://www.coumadin.com>

How can I find a Doctor?

St. Vincent Charity Hospital has doctors who have special training with Coumadin/Warfarin. To contact one of our doctors, please call:

Physician Referral Line at 1.800.223.8662

Visit our Web site at www.stvincentcharity.com.

Our doctors serve with a deep respect for all. Their goal is to give the best care and education whether or not a person can pay.

St. Vincent Charity Hospital

2351 East 22nd Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
216.861.6200
TTY: Ohio Relay 1.800.750.0750

HealthCare Center at Saint Luke's Pointe

11201 Shaker Boulevard
Cleveland, Ohio 44104
216.721.6900

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**ST. VINCENT CHARITY
MEDICAL CENTER**

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