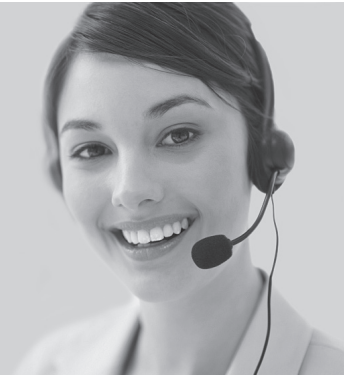


“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in ‘Helping Coumadin Help You Be Well.’
I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your UPMC Health Plan health coach, I’m ready to help in any way I can.”



What Is Coumadin®?

- Coumadin® is one brand of the medicine warfarin. It comes in tablet form.

What Does It Do?

- Coumadin® **makes your body less able to form blood clots.** Sometimes it is called a “blood thinner.”
- The upside is that it helps keep blood clots from forming in your veins and arteries. It also helps keep existing blood clots from getting larger. This can help prevent heart attacks and strokes.
- The downside is that it makes it easier to bruise. It also makes it harder to control bleeding.
- It may be ordered for you by your doctor if:
 - You have had a heart attack.
 - You have a heartbeat that is not regular.
 - You have a replacement or mechanical heart valve.
 - You have had or are at risk for a stroke, blood clots in a vein, or blood clots in your lungs.

Important Things to Know When You Are Prescribed Coumadin®

- Taking Coumadin® may save your life. But **not taking it as prescribed by your doctor could be dangerous.**
- Follow these steps:
 - Talk with your doctor about how to take Coumadin®.
 - Follow your doctor’s advice **exactly**.
 - Ask any questions you have. Keep asking until you understand.
 - Review the instructions with a family member or close friend. Be sure they understand when to call your doctor if you are not able to do so.



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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

- Try to take Coumadin® at **about the same time every day**. The best time is in the evening.
- **Keep taking it** even if you feel well. Do not stop taking it without talking to your doctor.
- You can take it with or without food.
- Before you start taking Coumadin®, be sure to discuss your health history with your doctor.
- Review any conditions you have as well as all the medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbals you take.
 - Many of them can affect how Coumadin® works.
 - Two of the many examples are over-the-counter cold or allergy medicines and pain medicines.
- Do **not** start or stop taking anything without your doctor's okay while on Coumadin®.

Make Sure You Take the Right Amount

- **Check the dose** on the tablet and the bottle. Make sure it is the right dose for you. Do not rely on the color or shape of the tablet to tell what dose it is. Colors and shapes vary among drug companies.
- **Do NOT take more or less than your doctor says to.** Do NOT take it more often than your doctor says to.
 - Call your doctor RIGHT AWAY if you take more or less than you should.
 - If you miss a dose:
 - If it is within 12 hours of when you should have taken it:
 - o Take the missed dose.
 - o Take your next dose at the regular evening time.
 - If it has been more than 12 hours:
 - o Wait until the next dose is due.
 - o Do NOT take a double dose the next day to make up for the missed dose.
 - o Call your doctor.
- **Keep all your appointments for blood tests and doctor visits.**
 - You will need to have your blood tested on a regular basis. Your doctor will tell you how often.
 - Your doctor uses the result to figure out your International Normalized Ratio (INR). This number helps your doctor adjust your dose of Coumadin® if needed.
 - Within a few hours of having your blood tested for the INR, your doctor should contact you to tell you if you should adjust your dose or keep it the same. If your doctor doesn't contact you, be sure to contact your doctor.
 - The usual INR goal range is from 2.0 to 3.0. But your goal range may be different. Ask your doctor what range is right for you. What if your INR is below your goal range? You may be at risk for forming a clot. What if your INR is above your goal range? You may be at risk for bleeding.

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Watch Out for Things That Might Cause Bleeding or Bruising

Keep in mind that you will bleed more easily and more heavily when you take Coumadin®.

- Do NOT play **contact sports**.
- Do NOT do other activities in which you might **fall or hit your head**.
- Do NOT use a **blade razor**. Use an electric shaver instead, if you can.
- Be careful when using **sharp knives and tools**.
- Tell all **doctors and dentists** you see that you take Coumadin®. Do this even for small things like flu shots or dental cleanings.
- Plan ahead for any **surgery**. Your doctor may need to change your dose ahead of time.
- Wear a **medical alert bracelet**. Or carry a card in your wallet to let other people know you take Coumadin®. This may save your life in case of an accident.

Be Careful! Some Common Things You Consume Affect the Way Coumadin® Works.

- Do NOT take **aspirin** or aspirin products unless your doctor tells you that you may.
- Do NOT take any **medicines, vitamins, herbals, or supplements** unless your doctor says it is okay. Many affect how Coumadin® works. A few of the many examples are antibiotics, vitamin K, vitamin E, ginkgo, garlic, and St. John's wort.
- Do NOT drink **cranberry juice**. Do NOT eat cranberry products or licorice.
- **Alcohol** also affects the way Coumadin® works. If you drink, talk with your doctor.
- Eat about the **SAME AMOUNT** of **vitamin K** each day.
 - For example, if you ate ½ cup of cooked broccoli on Monday, you got 110 micrograms (mcg.) of vitamin K. If you ate Romaine lettuce on Tuesday, to get roughly the same amount of vitamin K, you would have to eat 2 cups of Romaine. (If 1 cup has 57 mcg., then 2 cups would be 2 X. 57 mcg. = 114 mcg. 114 is close to 110, so that will be okay).
 - Use the chart below and the tracker on the last page to keep track of your daily Vitamin K intake.

Vitamin K Rich Foods

Foods Rich in Vitamin K	Serving Size	Vitamin K micrograms (mcg.)
Kale, cooked	½ cup	532
Spinach, cooked	½ cup	444
Collards, cooked	½ cup	418
Swiss chard, raw	1 cup	299
Swiss chard, cooked	½ cup	287
Mustard greens, raw	1 cup	279

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Turnip greens, cooked	½ cup	265
Parsley, raw	¼ cup	246
Broccoli, cooked	1 cup	220
Brussels sprouts, cooked	1 cup	219
Mustard greens, cooked	½ cup	210
Collards, raw	1 cup	184
Spinach, raw	1 cup	145
Turnip greens, raw	1 cup	138
Endive, raw	1 cup	116
Broccoli, raw	1 cup	89
Cabbage, cooked	½ cup	82
Green leaf lettuce	1 cup	71
Prunes, stewed	1 cup	65
Romaine lettuce, raw	1 cup	57
Asparagus	4 spears	48
Avocado, cubed, sliced, or pureed	1 cup	30-48
Tuna, canned in oil	3 ounces	37
Blueberries or blackberries, raw	1 cup	29
Peas, cooked	½ cup	21

Source: Important Information to Know When You Are Taking Warfarin (Coumadin®) and Vitamin K, National Institutes of Health Clinical Center, 9/5/12.

Call Your Doctor RIGHT AWAY If:

- You have any of these signs:
 - Headache, dizziness, or weakness
 - Pain, swelling or discomfort
 - Unusual bleeding, bruising, or changes in skin color
 - Excessive nosebleeds or bleeding from your gums
 - Bleeding from a cut that does not stop in the normal amount of time
 - Heavier bleeding than usual during your menstrual period
 - Urine that is pink, red, or dark brown
 - Bowel movements that are red or tarry black (Note: Blood in stools may look brown or black instead of red.)
 - Coughing up or vomiting blood or what looks like coffee grounds (Note: This blood may look brown or black instead of red.)

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- You have taken more or less Coumadin® than you should.
- You have missed your daily dose.
- You fall and get hurt, especially if you hit your head.
- You are pregnant or think you might be.

How to Use *My Coumadin® Tracker*

My Coumadin® Tracker (see the next page) is meant to:

- Help you remember to take your pill at the same time each day.
- Help you keep track of your appointments and any changes in your dose.
- Help you and your doctor learn what might be affecting how your Coumadin® works.

To use the tracker:

- Make copies of it to use. Keep the original blank for copying in the future.
- Fill out the month and year at the top.
- Find the day of the month in the first column. In that row, fill out the other columns. Include any changes to your Coumadin® dose.
- Take your tracker with you every time you visit your doctor.

Here are two examples:

Day of Month, Day of Week	Current Rx Dose	Dose Taken	Time Taken	Vitamin K Rich Foods, Amounts	Total Vitamin K (mcg.)	Other Notes (Include appointments, questions for my doctor)
1 Monday	5 mg	5 mg	7 pm	1 cup raw spinach	145	
2 Tuesday	5 mg	5 mg	7:15 pm	½ cup cooked broccoli 3 oz. tuna	110+37 = 147	Started using pillbox.

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Take Action

Check the tips below that you will put into action during the coming week. Add your own actions in the spaces provided.

- I will start using the tracker today. I will show it to my doctor at my next visit.
- I will call or visit my doctor and ask any questions I have. I will keep asking until I understand.
- I will review this tip sheet with a family member or close friend. I will be sure they understand when to call my doctor in case I'm not able to do so.
- I will buy an electric razor.
- I will get a medical alert bracelet that says I take Coumadin®.
- I will use a pillbox. I will dole out enough pills for the week. I will make sure I take one per day.
- I will set an alarm for when to take my pill.
- I will post a "sticky note" (Take Coumadin) where I will see it at my dosing time.
- I will place my pill bottle where I will see at my dosing time each day. This will trigger me take it. (For example, do you take your Coumadin® with dinner? Keep your pill bottle on your place mat.)
- _____
- _____



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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

(Month and Year)

My Coumadin® Tracker for

Day of Month, Day of Week	Current Rx Dose	Dose Taken	Time Taken	Vitamin K Rich Foods, Amounts	Total Vitamin K (mcg.)	Other Notes (Include appointments, questions for my doctor)
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