

Health Minute™

Thin is in

The blood thinner coumadin (warfarin) is prescribed for irregular heart rhythms such as atrial fibrillation or blood clots in the legs (deep vein thrombosis) or lungs (pulmonary embolus). It is also prescribed to people with mechanical heart valves. Coumadin keeps the blood thin by blocking vitamin-K mediated blood clotting factors found in blood plasma. It does not work the same way as aspirin or plavix which act upon blood platelets. If you have ever filled a prescription for coumadin, you are familiar with the potential for drug and food interactions. Although coumadin requires close monitoring through frequent blood tests, you do not need to be “chained” to it or any other medicine. Your doctor should be able to help tailor the proper dose to your lifestyle instead of you having to change your lifestyle for a drug.



Coumadin and your diet	Tips for taking Coumadin
<p>Keep your diet the same. Yes, fruits and vegetables that contain Vitamin K will decrease the amount of coumadin in your blood but if you eat the same every week, your doctor can tailor the dose of coumadin to you. <i>Like Dr. Ruggieri always tells his coumadin patients, eat what you want.</i></p> <p>Avoid binge drinking. One or two alcoholic drinks daily are acceptable if that is part of your usual routine. If your diet suddenly changes for any reason, let your doctor know.</p>	<p>Take it at the same time every day as directed by your doctor</p> <p>Do not skip or double a dose without your doctor's permission</p> <p>Stick with name brand or the same brand of generic every refill</p> <p>Get your blood levels checked as scheduled</p> <p>Discuss all other prescriptions and supplements you are taking with your doctor</p> <p>Do not stop taking coumadin for any reason without discussing it with the doctor who prescribed it.</p>