

Vitamin K and Anticoagulants

How do anticoagulants (Coumadin®) work?

Anticoagulants decrease the clotting ability of the blood to help prevent clots from forming in the blood vessels.

How does vitamin K affect anticoagulant therapy?

Vitamin K is found naturally in the foods you eat. It assists in blood clot formation. This is the opposite action of your anticoagulant medicine. Taking in the same amount of vitamin K each day will help the anticoagulants do their job. To do this, follow the guidelines below.

Foods to avoid

- Kale
- Seaweed
- Swiss chard
- Spinach
- Collard greens
- Turnip greens
- Parsley (unless used as a garnish or in small amounts in recipes for example 2 tablespoons)

You *may* choose up to one serving each day from the following list

- ½ cup Brussels sprouts
- ½ cup endive
- 1 cup lettuce
- ½ cup cabbage
- ½ cup broccoli
- ½ cup coleslaw
- ½ cup watercress
- ½ cup cooked soybeans
- 8 ounces of green tea
- ½ cup cooked lentils
- ½ cup scallions
- 1 tablespoons soybean oil

All other foods

Eat based on your usual intake.

If you drink cranberry juice, limit your intake to ½ cup or 4 ounces per day.

Vitamin supplements

If you currently take a vitamin supplement that contains vitamin K, continue to take it on a daily basis.

Notify the Coumadin clinic if you take nutrition supplement drinks such as Boost®, Ensure® or Carnation Instant Breakfast®.

Avoid herbal supplements

Herbal supplements can interfere with your anticoagulant therapy. If you have any questions about herbal supplements, speak with your anticoagulant nurse.

Your physician is monitoring how your blood clots. If there are wide variations in your vitamin K from day to day, it will be difficult for your physician to manage your care.

If you have questions, a nutrition education specialist is available to help.
1-508-852-6175 or 1-888-392-0183