

Anticoagulant Self-Management Plan

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow your provider's directions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your medicines have not expired—check the dates! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not stop medicines without first checking with your provider. | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep a medication list and bring to your appointments. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call your provider before restarting medicines. | <input type="checkbox"/> Tell your provider about ALL medicines you are taking, including over-the-counter vitamins and herbal remedies. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not skip or double up on your medicines. | <input type="checkbox"/> Tell all of your providers and dentists that you are taking anticoagulants. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow your provider's diet recommendations. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check with your provider before drinking alcohol. | |

Green Flags — All Clear

What this means ...



If you have:

- INR within the range recommended by your PCP

- Good work!
- Your symptoms are under control

Yellow Flags — Caution

What this means ...



When you:

- Add, change, or stop any medicine, or take:
 - Coumadin—high drug-food and drug-drug interactions
 - Antibiotics—can cause INR to change
 - Advil, Aspirin, Motrin, or other over-the-counter medicines—can increase bleeding
 - Thyroid medicine or Vitamin K—can decrease anticoagulant effects
- Experience any of the following:
 - Diarrhea or vomiting 1+ day
 - Fever or infection
 - Abdominal or stomach pain
 - Cramping that does not go away
 - Loss of appetite
 - Jaundice
 - Changes in exercise level
 - Bleeding from gums or nose
 - Coughing up blood
 - Red or black bowel movements
 - Red or dark-brown urine
 - Bleeding that does not stop
 - Severe headache
 - Chest pain or discomfort

- You may need follow-up by your primary care provider
- The medication may be causing side effects.
- Your medication may need to be adjusted

Call your doctor, consulting nurse, or health care provider if symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

Continued from left column:

- Burning, crawling, itching, numbness, prickling, “pins and needles” or tingling
- Confusion
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing.
- Dizziness, faintness, or lightheadedness
- Unusual tiredness or weakness
- Skin sores or blisters
- Frequent bruising

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags — Stop and Think

What this means ...



If you have:

- Rectal bleeding or red blood in your stool
- Arm, back, or jaw pain
- Blue or purple toes
- Change in consciousness
- Increase in chest tightness or heaviness
- Fast or irregular heartbeat
- Trouble breathing with exertion
- Severe abdominal pain or stomach pain
- A fall or injury, especially to the head

If possible, notify your health care provider's office

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions: CALL 9-1-1

If you notice a Red Flag, CALL 911. Emergency!

Anticoagulant Health Fast Facts

- An anticoagulant is a substance that prevents coagulation (clotting) of blood. This reduces blood clotting in an artery, a vein, or the heart. A clot can block the blood flow to your heart muscle and cause a heart attack. A clot can also block blood flow to your brain, causing a stroke.
- Are prescribed by your health care provider for various reasons. Sometimes it is to prevent blood clots from forming, or to lower your chance of a blood clot forming.
- Though sometimes referred to as a “blood thinner”, they do not actually thin the blood. The medication reduces the ability of the blood to form clots.
- Some common medications include Warfarin (or Coumadin) and are taken by mouth. Heparin (or Hep-Lock or Hep Flush) is an injected medication.
- Some anticoagulants like Warfarin or Coumadin require close monitoring. Your healthcare provider will order a blood test called INR that stands for “International Normalized Ratio”. It measures how long it takes your blood to clots and your healthcare provider will decide what INR numbers are best for you.
- Several medicines can interact with anticoagulants. Some increase and some decrease the effect of the medication.
- Over the counter pain medicines can increase the effect of anticoagulants, thus increasing bleeding risk. These include Aspirin, Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve (Naproxen).
- Some medications that decrease the effect of anticoagulants include Vitamin K and Thyroid medications.
- Some foods are high in vitamin K. In general, leafy green vegetables, certain beans and oils are high in Vitamin K. Other examples of foods and beverages include: beef liver, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cheese, collard greens, green tea, kale, lentils, lettuce, spinach, soybean oil, and turnip greens.
- Antibiotics can significantly change your INR, sometimes very quickly.
- Herbs can easily interact with your medicines and, if taken together, may be harmful to your health. Herbs may also be harmful for certain health conditions or medical procedures.

What can you do?

- Have your blood checked (INR) as per health care provider directions.
- Take medications only as prescribed. Do not take more medication or less medication without talking with your health care provider.
- Before you start taking any antibiotics, even if just for a few days make sure you check with your medical provider.
- Make sure you keep your vitamin K intake on a consistent basis. Avoid sudden changes in the intake of foods and vitamins containing vitamin K.
- Read food labels.
- Consult your health care provider before taking herbal remedies. Inform your health care provider of which herbs you use.
- Talk with your health care provider or dentist before having any surgery.

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County— plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County.

For more information, call 1-844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org



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