

## Other precautions to be taken while on Warfarin therapy

Avoid activities which could cause you to bruise e.g. Contact sports. Take care when brushing your teeth or shaving. Consider using a soft tooth brush or an electric shaver.



## AFTER TAKING YOUR WARFARIN MEDICINE How is it checked?

You need blood tests to check your I.N.R. (International Normalised Ratio). This measures the length of time it takes for your blood to clot. The ideal I.N.R. will be recorded in your Warfarin Anticoagulation Therapy Record book. The blood test checks that you are taking the correct dose of warfarin, and that you are not taking too much or too little warfarin.

It is extremely important to keep your appointments.

If you cannot attend, contact the Warfarin Clinic to make a new appointment.

## What should I do if I get side effects?

Contact your Doctor immediately or attend your nearest Accident and Emergency Department if you have any problems with bruising, bleeding or any of the following;

Longer than usual bleeding from cuts

Bleeding that does not stop by itself

If you notice any unexplained bruising, especially black or brown spots on your skin if you have not received an injury

Nose bleeds

Bleeding gums

Red or dark brown urine

Red or black stools

Jaundice (yellow colour)

Increased bleeding during periods or any other vaginal bleeding

If you have suffered an injury, especially to your head, eyes or joints.

Vomiting up blood or material which looks like coffee grounds

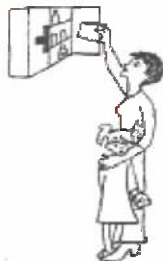
Chest pain or shortness of breath

If you experience any major changes to your general state of health, for example, vomiting, diarrhoea or fever

Any skin reactions and / or changes of the skin  
Also please inform the Warfarin Clinic at your next visit.

If you are worried about side effects then talk to your Doctor, Pharmacist or Nurse.

## Always carry your Warfarin Anticoagulation Therapy Record Booklet and Alert Card with you.



If leaving home overnight or going to Dentist, Doctor or Hospital visit always bring your warfarin booklet with you, show your booklet to any Health Care Professional when obtaining treatment. Show it to your pharmacist when you are having a prescription dispensed and when purchasing all medicines from a pharmacy. Also show it to anyone giving you treatment that can cause bleeding.

**On discharge from hospital always ensure you know your correct warfarin dose and next blood test.**

**Keep your tablets in a safe place, well out of the sight and reach of children**

## PLEASE INFORM THE CLINIC STAFF OF THE FOLLOWING

Any missed doses or any change in warfarin dose since your last visit to the clinic

Any change in your existing medication, or any new medication including alternative medicines or vitamin supplements

Any recent illness or admission to hospital

Any change in lifestyle, e.g. holidays, change in diet.

Any appointments for dental or surgical procedures

If you do not understand any aspect of your warfarin therapy.



Beaumont Hospital

# Warfarin Clinic



Patient  
Information  
Leaflet

Patient Name and MRN:

\_\_\_\_\_

Indication for Warfarin:

\_\_\_\_\_

Target INR Range: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Telephone Numbers



**01-809 3982** (Secretary)

**01-809 3497** (Nurse)

Clinic Hours

**9:00am - 4:00pm**

### What does Warfarin do?

Warfarin is an oral anticoagulant. It stops your blood from forming harmful clots in your blood vessels. Warfarin is used for different reasons. Ask your Doctor to explain why you are taking Warfarin.

### BEFORE TAKING YOUR MEDICINE

It is important to tell your Doctor if:


- You are taking any other medicines
- You are breast-feeding
- You have had surgery recently
- You have had stomach ulcers
- You have problems with your liver or your kidneys
- You have high blood pressure
- You could be pregnant or are planning a pregnancy



**Warfarin carries a risk of harming an unborn child if taken in the early weeks of pregnancy. You should talk to your Doctor before planning a pregnancy. You must contact your doctor immediately if your period is more than one week late and you might be pregnant.**

### Tablet Brands and Strengths

Become familiar with the different strengths and colours of warfarin tablets you need to take. You may need a mixture of tablet strengths to make your dose. 2 brands of warfarin are available in Ireland: Warfant® and Teva®.

Warfant® tablets	Teva® tablets
1mg (Brown) 	1mg (Brown) 
3mg (Blue) 	3mg (Blue) 
5mg (Pink) 	5mg (Pink) 

Always take the same brand of warfarin. If your warfarin brand is changed notify the anticoagulation clinic promptly as it may affect your INR.

An INR check should be done 5-7 days after a warfarin brand switch.

### How should I take my Warfarin?

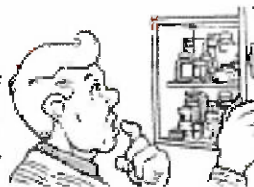
It is important to take your Warfarin tablets at the same time each day. The best time is between 5pm and 7pm. Warfarin tablets can be taken before, during or after a meal

### What dose should I take?

The warfarin dose may change depending on your blood result. The warfarin dose will be written in your Warfarin (Anticoagulation) Therapy record book and letter. Always check this book for your correct dose. Ask your Doctor, Pharmacist or Nurse if you are not sure how much you should be taking

### What should I do if I miss a dose or I take the incorrect dose?

If you remember the missed dose of warfarin later the same day, take it as soon as you remember. If you don't remember the missed dose until the next day, leave it out completely. If the dose you took in error was much higher than your normal dose, please contact your anticoagulation clinic/doctor. **Never take double doses. Never take an extra dose** if you are unsure as to whether you have taken your tablets. Use a calendar to remind you to take your tablets. **Do not run out of tablets.**



### Other Medications and Herbal Products

Many medicines may interfere with the action of warfarin. If you are starting or stopping another medication, particularly some antibiotics, you may need more frequent blood tests. Contact your anticoagulation clinic or your doctor/pharmacist for further advice, as a blood test may need to be arranged within 4-7 days of changing medication.

You should buy all your medicines and supplements from a pharmacy and tell the pharmacist you are taking warfarin. Avoid Aspirin and aspirin-containing medicines unless prescribed by your doctor who knows you are taking warfarin. Avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen (Neurofen®) which is available as an over-the-counter (OTC) medicine. Paracetamol and codeine-based pain killers are acceptable, although be aware that some paracetamol

combination products may contain aspirin. Avoid Buccal gels like Daktarin or Bonjella. Some alternative medicines and herbal products may also affect the action of warfarin. Please check with your anticoagulation clinic or your doctor/pharmacist before use.

### Alcohol

It is recommended that you do not exceed the recommended upper limit of 2 standard drinks per day.

1 standard drink:

- = 1 glass or half pint of beer, lager, stout
- = 1 small glass of wine
- = 1 single measure of spirits, e.g. whiskey or vodka or gin.

**It is dangerous to 'binge drink' while taking warfarin**

### Diet

It is important to eat a well-balanced diet and to keep your diet consistent so the amount of vitamin K you eat is the same. Foods rich in vitamin K can cause warfarin to be less effective. Any major changes to your diet may affect how your body responds to your warfarin therapy.

Foods rich in Vitamin K include green leafy vegetables (e.g. brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage, spinach, lettuce), beetroot, broccoli, cauliflower, avocado, peas, asparagus, beans, lentils and liver. It is not necessary to avoid these foods: eating moderate quantities of these foods on a consistent basis will not affect the action of your warfarin.

Consistency in the intake of certain other foods/drinks is also important as sudden increases or decreases may modify the effect of warfarin. These include fish oils, mango, soy milk and grapefruit juice. It is recommended to avoid cranberry juice. **It is important to keep your diet consistent.**

### How long should I carry on taking my Warfarin tablets?

It is essential to keep taking these tablets until your Doctor tells you to stop.