

Warfarin and Your Diet

If you are taking warfarin, foods can affect how well this medication works for you. **The most important thing to remember is to eat what you normally eat and be consistent (don't make any major changes) in your diet.**

What are some recommendations for managing what I eat and drink while I'm taking warfarin?

- Always follow your anticoagulation provider's instructions for getting your blood drawn to check your INR. **INR (international normalized ratio)** is a lab test measurement of how quickly your blood clots. Diet, other medications, and illness can affect your INR.
- Let your anticoagulation provider know if there is a change in your diet, including adding or changing the amounts of foods such as greens, cranberries, cranberry juice, fish oil supplements, garlic, ginger, licorice, or turmeric. Read your food labels to see if your foods have been fortified with vitamin K (read more about vitamin K below).
- Let your anticoagulation provider know if you are drinking herbal teas or taking supplements. Many of these can affect your INR.
- Drinking a lot of alcohol can increase your INR and put you at risk for bleeding. If you choose to drink alcohol, do not drink more than 1-2 drinks per day.
- Let your anticoagulation provider know if you go on a weight loss plan. For example, do not take Boost[®], Ensure[®], or SlimFast[®] without talking with your anticoagulation provider.
- Do not start taking any vitamins, herbal teas, or nutritional supplements without talking with your anticoagulation provider.

How does vitamin K affect warfarin?

Vitamin K helps your blood clot and is found in many foods. Eating foods that contain vitamin K can affect the way your warfarin medication works. Eating more vitamin K than usual may cause a low INR, and eating less vitamin K than usual may cause a high INR. Because of this, **you should try to eat the same amount of vitamin K every day.** If you change your diet for any reason, be sure to tell your anticoagulation provider.

What foods contain vitamin K?

The highest amount of vitamin K is in green leafy vegetables. Remember, you don't need to avoid vitamin K - you just need to make sure you eat around the same amount of vitamin K every day. Use the tables below to help you track and measure how much vitamin K you're eating each day.

Foods with high amounts (more than 80 µg) of vitamin K

Vegetables:

- Broccoli (½ cup)
- Brussel sprouts (5 sprouts)
- Collard greens, cooked kale, turnip greens, cooked spinach (2 tablespoons)
- Endive (2 cups)
- Kale; raw (¾ cup)
- Lettuce; leaf, red (1 cup)
- Romaine lettuce (2 cups)
- Mustard greens (1/4 cup)
- Parsley (5 sprigs)
- Seaweed (4 oz)
- Raw spinach (½ cup)

Drinks:

- V8® juice
- SlimFast®
- Carnation® Breakfast Essentials™
- Protein drinks (Boost®, Ensure®, Premier Protein®)

Foods with low amounts (less than 30 µg) of vitamin K

Vegetables:

- Green beans
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Corn
- Cucumber with peel
- Eggplant
- Mushrooms
- Onion
- Parsnip
- Green pepper
- Raw potatoes
- Summer squash
- Baked sweet potatoes

Fruits:

- Apples
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Cantaloupe
- Grapes
- Grapefruit
- Lemons
- Oranges
- Peaches

Meat, fish, and eggs:

- Beef
- Chicken
- Ham
- Mackerel
- Pork
- Shrimp
- Tuna
- Turkey
- Beef liver
- Chicken liver
- Liverwurst
- Eggs

Dairy:

- Butter
- Cheddar cheese
- Sour cream
- Yogurt

Grains:

- Plain bagel
- Breads
- Cereals
- Flour
- Instant oatmeal
- White rice
- Pasta

Legumes and nuts:

- Flax seeds
- Walnuts
- Pecans

Oils, fats, and dressings:

- Canola oil
- Corn oil
- Olive oil
- Peanut oil
- Safflower oil
- Sesame oil
- Sunflower oil
- Margarine (2 tablespoons)

Drinks:

- Coffee
- Cola
- Fruit juice
- Milk
- Tea
- Water

When should I contact my anticoagulation provider?

It is important to contact your anticoagulation provider if you have any changes in your health. Please call the Anticoagulation Clinic at (734) 998-6944 if you have any questions.

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