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FOOD – DRUG INTERACTIONS: COUMADIN AND VITAMIN K

Coumadin (or Warfarin) is a medication ordered by your doctor to manage your present medical condition. It keeps your blood from clotting (also known as an anticoagulant). A blood clot could cause a serious health problem for you. You must take the coumadin as prescribed.

Vitamin K is an important nutrient in the body. It is found in some of the food that you eat (see following table). Vitamin K has the opposite effect of coumadin. It helps the blood to clot. Since you are taking coumadin, you need to know which foods are high sources of Vitamin K. This will help you to prevent a food – drug interaction from happening that could cause the coumadin not to work well.

The key to managing your diet when taking coumadin is to keep the intake of food containing Vitamin K at a constant level. In other words, you should not change your eating habits dramatically. Do not eliminate foods containing Vitamin K and do not increase your intake of foods containing Vitamin K while you are taking this medication.

If you decide to suddenly change the intake of these foods, it will affect the way that the drug works.

General Guidelines and Recommendations:

- Vitamin K can counteract how coumadin works.
- The amount of coumadin and when to take it is ordered by your doctor. Always take the medication according to the prescription.
- It is important to continue to eat your usual diet and maintain a consistent intake of food containing Vitamin K.
- If you need to make dramatic diet changes (illness, weight loss diet or other reason) call your doctor. The amount of coumadin that you take may need to be adjusted.
- Do not take large doses of other vitamins, especially A, E, K and C (more than the daily RDA).
- Do not take herbal supplements including garlic oil supplements, fish oil supplements, ginger supplements or onion extract pills.
- Do not drink herbal teas while taking coumadin.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Some people may be advised not to consume large amounts of cranberry products (juice, syrup, relish). Follow your doctor's recommendation.

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Vitamin K Food List

* Foods High in Vitamin K

Greens: Kale, Mustard, Swiss Chard, Turnip
Parsley
Seaweed

* These foods contain the most Vitamin K and should be avoided.

Moderate Vitamin K	Low Vitamin K
Avocado	Artichoke
Beans pod, raw	Asparagus
Broccoli	Beets
Cabbage (white, red), Sauerkraut,	Bean sprouts
Coleslaw	Carrots
Chickpeas	Cauliflower
Collard Greens	Celery
Cucumbers with skin	Corn
Green Onions	Green beans
Lentils	Green peppers
Lettuce (most) including Romaine,	Peeled Cucumbers
Watercress, Endive	Peeled Summer Squash
Liver	Mushrooms
Salad oils including canola, soybean,	Onions
olive	Parsnips
Mayonnaise made from canola or	Peas
soybean oil	Potatoes
Pickles	Sweet Potatoes
Pistachio Nuts	Bread, Rice, Pasta, other grains
Snack chips containing Olestra	Fruit
Soybeans, Tofu	Dairy Foods
Spinach	Meat
	Fish
	Poultry

Foods in the Moderate Vitamin K List should not be eaten in large amounts.

Foods in the Low Vitamin K List can be eaten as desired.

Breastfeeding Moms:

Coumadin may be transferred to your baby through breast milk. This could cause bleeding in your baby. Talk with your doctor about the best way to feed the baby if you have to take coumadin while breastfeeding.