



Vitamin K in your diet while taking Coumadin

Warfarin (Coumadin) is a blood-thinning medication (anticoagulant) that is used to help treat and prevent blood clots. Blood clots can cause stroke, heart attack, or other serious conditions such as clots in your legs and lungs.

Vitamin K plays an important role in blood clotting. Warfarin works by decreasing the activity of vitamin K and reducing clotting. Eating large amounts of foods high in vitamin K reduces the effectiveness of Warfarin. For this reason, if you take Warfarin, you should **avoid supplements containing large amounts of vitamin K** and **eat a diet consistent in the amount of foods high in vitamin K**, such as:

- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Beef liver
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts – very high, would recommend little if any eaten.
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower – raw is very high, would recommend little if any eaten.
- Collard Greens
- Endive
- Soybeans
- Lettuce
- Kale
- Spinach
- Turnips
- Watercress
- Olive oil
- Mayonnaise
- Canola oil
- Soybean oil
- Green Tea – Very high, would recommend not drinking.

If you take Warfarin, eat a sensible diet. Talk with your doctor before making any major changes in your diet. Also, be consistent in how much vitamin K you consume each day. Pay attention to how often you eat foods with vitamin K and their portion sizes. Talk to your doctor if you are unable to eat for several days or have persistent stomach upset, diarrhea or fever. Your doctor may need to adjust your Warfarin dose. In addition, limit alcohol and avoid/limit cranberry juice (consume less than 8 oz per day) or eating cranberries, which may increase the effect of Warfarin and lead to bleeding problems.

Certain medications and dietary supplements can also affect the way Warfarin works. Tell your doctor before taking any new medications, including herbal supplements and over-the-counter remedies. In addition, avoid aspirin and frequent or high doses of acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), which can increase the effects of Warfarin and cause bleeding problems.

Sources: “A Patients Guide to using Coumadin” from the maker of Warfarin & American Dietetic Association article “Vitamin K: What are the current dietary recommendations for patients taking Coumadin?” JADA 2007.