

CORNERSTONE VNA

COUMADIN TEACHING SHEET

Your doctor or other health professional has started you on the medication Coumadin®/warfarin. Patients who are on Coumadin®/warfarin must be watched closely. You will need to have blood drawn often. You will also need to be careful that you do not do something to hurt yourself and cause bleeding. Your doctor will work with you to keep you healthy and safe while you are taking Coumadin®/warfarin.

- *Coumadin lowers the body's ability to make blood clots.*

WHAT COUMADIN®/WARFARIN IS AND WHAT IT DOES FOR YOU

If your blood is too thick and forms clots, you could be at risk for heart attack, stroke, and other serious medical problems. Coumadin®/warfarin is a medicine that will keep your blood from clotting. The drug is an anticoagulant. "Anti" means against and "coagulant" means to thicken into a gel or solid. Sometimes this drug is called a blood thinner. Think of syrup being poured—it is sticky and thick and flows slowly. Coumadin®/warfarin helps your blood flow easier and not clot.

****THINGS YOU SHOULD ALWAYS DO****

- You should take Coumadin at the same time each day.
- You should tell any doctor or dentist you see that you are taking Coumadin.
- You should wear a medic alert bracelet.
- You should get a protime test as often as your doctor orders it to determine what your proper dosage should be. This test is also called a PT/INR or INR.

****THINGS THAT MAY CHANGE YOUR PROTIME RESULTS****

- Sickness
- Diet
- Other medicines
- Physical activity
- Smoking or use of Alcohol

DIET

Don't make major changes in your diet without speaking to your doctor. You need to pay attention to the amount of foods with Vitamin K in your diet since it helps your blood to clot and may affect your protime results if you have too much of the following foods that are high in Vitamin K:

- Mayonnaise/Miracle Whip
- Canola
- Salad or soybean oils
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cranberries
- Collard greens
- Cucumber peels
- Endive
- Green scallion
- Kale
- Lettuce
- Liver
- Mustard greens
- Parsley
- Spinach
- Turnip greens
- Watercress.
- Margarine

AVOID

Herbal teas that have tonka beans, melilot (sweet clover), or sweet woodruff.

THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO

- Don't take an extra pill to catch up (in case you forget your dose, take the missed dose as soon as possible and call the Doctor but **DO NOT** take a double dose)
- Don't take any other medications without speaking to your physician
- Don't take Coumadin if you're pregnant or trying to become pregnant.

SIDE EFFECTS

- Skin changes or discoloration
- Purple toes/fingers
- Pain in stomach, back or sides
- Severe dizziness, headache, weakness
- Diarrhea
- Easy bruising or bleeding that will not stop
- Blood in urine
- Black, Tarry or Bloody stools
- Nosebleeds or bleeding gums
- Sudden numbness or weakness

*****Side effects other than those listed above may also occur - You should report any and all side effects to your Healthcare Professional.*****

Major bleeding—call your doctor, or go to the hospital emergency room if you have any of the following:

- Red, dark, coffee, or cola colored urine
- Bowel Movements that are red or look like tar
- Bleeding from the gums or nose that does not stop quickly
- Vomit that is coffee-colored or bright red
- A cut that will not stop bleeding within 10 minutes
- Dizziness or weakness
- Anything red in color that you cough up
- Severe pain, such as a headache or stomach ache
- Sudden appearance of bruises for no reason
- Menstrual bleeding that is much heavier than normal.
- A serious fall or hit on the head.

MD _____

MD Phone Number _____

Target INR Range _____