

### **How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?**

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand rub (special gel) available at the main entrance of the hospital and at the entrance to every ward before coming in to and after leaving the ward or hospital. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand rub. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

[www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)

# **What you should know about your Warfarin tablets**

### **Patient information leaflet**

If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please ask for assistance

**Safe & compassionate care,**

**every time**



## Additional information

- a) Warfarin taken in the early weeks of pregnancy carries a small risk of damaging the unborn child. Women should not plan or start a pregnancy without consulting your doctor who will be able to decide about continuation of your Warfarin. Women of child-bearing potential should use a reliable means of contraception during Warfarin therapy. If you become pregnant, and this is unplanned, tell your doctor immediately.
- b) Remind your doctor or dentist you are taking Warfarin if any surgery or dental treatment is needed, as the Warfarin dose will have to be reduced.
- c) If you have not been given a yellow anticoagulant therapy record book, ask one of the nurses for one before leaving the ward. You should carry your yellow booklet with you as a record of your treatment.
- d) If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment consult your doctor or pharmacist or anticoagulation clinic.

## Contact Numbers for Advice:

Stoke Mandeville Hospital - Anticoagulant Team  
01296 315516/10

Wycombe Hospital - Anticoagulant Team  
01494 426270/425241

## Why are you taking Warfarin?

You may have developed a blood clot or you may have a heart problem where the risk of clotting is increased.

## How Warfarin works

Warfarin slows down your normal blood clotting to prevent further clots occurring.

## Can you take other medicines with Warfarin?

Warfarin interacts with a number of other medicines. Remind your doctor you are on Warfarin if you are prescribed any new medication or if any of your usual medication is stopped. Also please inform the anticoagulation nurses of any changes in medicine.

## Can you drink alcoholic drinks whilst taking Warfarin?

You can drink regularly the equivalent of two glasses of wine daily. However, heavy drinking will affect your Warfarin control and may lead to bleeding problems.

## Side effects which may occur in patients taking Warfarin

Bleeding is the main side effect of treatment. Tell your doctor immediately about blood in urine, blood in motions or excessive bruising. You may, however, notice some increased bruising of a minor nature when on Warfarin. If you fall or injure yourself, tell your doctor immediately as it may be necessary to reverse the Warfarin effect or even stop Warfarin for a few days.

## The effects of your diet

Avoid 'crash' diets or 'binge' eating. Both of these can affect your Warfarin control. Weekly blood checks are necessary if you wish to diet.

## What to do if you miss a dose

If you forget to take your dose, take a dose and a half the next day. If you are not sure just continue on your normal dose. Seek advice if necessary. Take Warfarin in the evening.

## Special Precautions

The dose of Warfarin has to be controlled carefully to ensure that you are on an adequate dose to slow clotting without causing excessive bleeding. To do this, you need to have regular blood tests. Your dose of Warfarin is worked out from the result of these tests.

If you cannot attend the clinic for your blood test for any reason please inform the anticoagulation clinic as soon as possible.

Make an early appointment (within one week) if:

- a) you develop vomiting, diarrhoea, or go off your food and this persists for 48 hours or more,
- b) any medication is started or stopped.

## How long will you be taking Warfarin?

The length of time of Warfarin therapy can vary from a few weeks to a few months. For some patients lifelong treatment may be necessary. Your doctor will advise you.