



# **The Coumadin® (Warfarin) Help Book: Anticoagulation Therapy to Prevent and Manage Strokes, Heart Attacks, and Other Vascular Conditions**

*Diana M. Schneider*

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This essential guide was written for everyone who must take the anticoagulation drugs Coumadin® or its generic form warfarin, and who finds the dietary and medication guidelines that need to be followed both confusing and complicated. It explains why these drugs require modifications to the diet and careful monitoring of both prescription and over-the-counter medications, emphasizing that consistency is the key to success. It will help readers to live a normal, healthy life despite the restriction involved in successfully taking this medication; tables containing information about foods and drugs will be referred to constantly. This book provides the information that every person who requires anticoagulation therapy needs to manage their medication and get on with their lives.

Coumadin® and warfarin are the most commonly prescribed anticoagulants – or “blood thinner” used to prevent strokes and heart attacks resulting from blood clots in people with a variety of medical conditions. This includes the more than 10% of people over age 65 who have atrial fibrillation, anyone who a prosthetic heart valve or other cardiac conditions that can lead to the formation of blood clots, following any episode of deep vein thromboembolism, and people who have already suffered a stroke or heart attack.

The book provides detailed information on:

- how these drugs work to prevent the formation of blood clots;
- what readers should know about the vitamin K content of foods and COUMADIN® therapy, and how to regulate their diet to maintain clotting at the optimal level for therapeutic effectiveness;
- potential side effects of anticoagulant therapy, including the risk of bleeding when appropriate levels are not maintained as well as “nuisance” effects such as mild hair loss;
- how both prescription and nonprescription drugs, as well as alcohol, can affect anticoagulant effectiveness, including those that enhance their action and cause excessive blood thinning and life-threatening bleeding, and how to work with their physicians to maintain an optimal anticoagulant level while taking needed medications;
- how to manage anticoagulation therapy when surgery is needed or new medical conditions are diagnosed, and why these drugs should not be taken during pregnancy;
- tables that provide detailed information on the Vitamin K content of specific foods and supplements, interactions with prescription and nonprescription drugs, and more.

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