



20 Tips for Blood Thinner Users

1. Stick to a schedule and take your medicine at the same time each day.
2. Do not double your dose if you missed one. Inform your doctor.
3. Be more careful to avoid injuries
4. Wear gloves when you use sharp objects
5. Wear shoes to protect your feet
6. Switch to an electric razor
7. Use a soft toothbrush
8. You can do sports (e.g. walk, run, swim) as long you can avoid injuries. Wear a helmet and avoid contact sports.
9. Wear a medical alert bracelet in case you're in an accident and can't talk.
10. If you cut yourself and the cut is small, apply constant pressure over the cut until the bleeding stops (this may take more than 10 minutes).
11. Keep supplies handy. Have a stash of bandages and dressings at home. Always carry some with you, in case you get a cut. Special powder can stop a bleed quickly and keep it under control until you're able to get medical help.
12. If you get hit hard, call your doctor or go to the hospital right away, even if there's no blood.
13. Make sure any doctor who prescribes medication for you knows you're taking a blood thinner
14. Don't take over-the-counter medicines (e.g. aspirin, ibuprofen), vitamins, or supplements unless you check with your doctor first. The blood thinner will either not work or it can make you bleed more.
15. Occasional alcohol drinks are fine. High alcohol intake reduces blood thinners' effectiveness.
16. Coumadin users should eat a sensible and well-balanced diet. Avoid large amounts of foods with high Vitamin K concentrations (e.g. spinach, broccoli, lentils, canola and soya oils). It is fine if you eat reasonable amounts of these foods as long as you try to keep this amount about the same from week to week.
17. If you need a surgical procedure or dental work, be sure to tell the surgeon or dentist that you are on blood thinners and the reason you take them.
18. If you have any symptoms of illness such as vomiting, diarrhea, infection, or fever, inform your doctor. Illness can change the way blood thinners work.

19. If you are on Coumadin and planning a vacation check your INR, as your dosing may need to be readjusted. While traveling, carry your medications with you at all times.

20. Call your doctor if:

- **you feel weak or look pale**
- **you cough or vomit blood**
- **you experience unusual bleeding from your nose or gums**
- **you have unusual headache**
- **you have excessive bruising or if your stool is black.**