

Step 7: Contact your doctor, pharmacist or hospital without delay if you have unusual bleeding such as:

- dark red or brown urine
- red or black bowel motions
- vomiting or coughing up blood
- cuts, nosebleeds or bleeding gums that go on for a long time
- lots of unusual bruises
- a severe headache

Step 8: Let others know you are taking warfarin

- Inform all the health and dental professionals you see.
- In case of an accident or emergency carry identification that says you take warfarin. Consider a Safety Alert Bracelet*.

* Gold and white card holders may be eligible for a DVA subsidised Safety Alert Bracelet

Looking for more information?

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist

Ask for a **Home Medicines Review** to learn more about your warfarin

For further information including the Safety Alert Bracelet subsidy call **1300 556 906**

Veterans' MATES

www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates

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Australian Medicines Handbook
Drug and Therapeutics Information Service



Veterans' MATES

8 steps to taking warfarin

Get the best from your medicines





Warfarin



know



your steps

Warfarin is a very effective medicine when taken correctly.

Follow these 8 steps, and work with your doctor and pharmacist, to ensure you are taking your warfarin correctly and safely.

Step 1: Know why you are taking warfarin

- Warfarin is an anticoagulant drug that helps prevent blood clots from forming.
- Blood clots can cause stroke or heart attack or other serious conditions.

Step 2: Take your warfarin exactly as prescribed

- The two brands of warfarin Marevan® and Coumadin® **are not the same.** Always use the same brand.
- Each brand comes in different strength tablets. Each strength has a different colour.
- Take the **exact** dose of warfarin prescribed by your doctor.
- Take your warfarin at about the same time of day.



Types of warfarin



Step 3: Know what to do if you miss a dose

- If you forget for longer than 3-4 hours do not take that dose. Instead take your next dose as normal.
- Never take a double dose.
- Write down any missed or late doses.



Step 4: Have regular warfarin blood tests (INR)

- Regular INR tests allow the dose of warfarin you need to be worked out and changed if necessary.
- Record your INR test result and warfarin dose. Take your record to all your medical appointments.
- It is a good idea to know what your INR should be.

Step 5: Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before starting, changing or stopping any medicines

- All medicines, including natural and herbal products, may affect your warfarin.

Always ask "Is this OK to take while I am on warfarin?"

Step 6: Maintain a well balanced diet

- Major changes in your diet or bowel habits may affect how your warfarin works.
- Drink no more than 1-2 standard alcoholic drinks per day.

