

Your Health Checklist: Taking Your Anticoagulant Safely

Anticoagulant medications, or blood thinners, are prescribed for several reasons.

If you have been prescribed an anticoagulant to reduce your risk of blood clots follow this checklist to help take your anticoagulant medication safely.

Do: Take your anticoagulant exactly as directed by your healthcare provider.

You may take some anticoagulants in a tablet or capsule form, while others need to be injected.

Do: Take your medication at the same time each day.

Do: Develop a system to help you keep track of your medications. Some people use a pill organizer to help.

Do: Store your medication at room temperature, out of direct sun light.

Do: Talk to all of your healthcare providers, including your dentist, before you have an appointment and tell them you are taking an anticoagulant medication.

Do not: Miss any doses without direction from your doctor.

Do not: Double dose if you miss taking your medication. Just continue as normal the next scheduled time.

Do not: Take any new medications, herbs, vitamins, nutrition supplements, or over-the-counter pain relievers without first talking to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

Some medications -- even over-the-counter medications you take for a cold or upset stomach -- can change how your anticoagulant is working.

Do not: Take an anticoagulant without first talking to your healthcare provider if you are pregnant or may become pregnant.

It is important to take your anticoagulant medication exactly as prescribed to ensure it does its job safely.

If you have any questions about taking your anticoagulant, talk to your healthcare provider.