

What is Warfarin?

Warfarin is a type of anticoagulant, commonly called a blood thinner. It helps control how quickly your blood clots.

You may be prescribed warfarin if you have: atrial fibrillation or arrhythmia; arteriosclerosis or hardening of the arteries; heart disease.

Or if you have had: heart surgery including angioplasty with stenting or an artificial heart valve; stroke; deep vein thrombosis, which is a blood clot in your leg; pulmonary embolism, which is a blood clot in your lungs; joint replacement surgery; or if you are on bed rest.

There are also other medical conditions that may increase your risk to develop clots.

Warfarin can help stop new clots from forming, prevent existing clots from getting bigger, and prevent clots from breaking off the artery walls and traveling through the body.

Warfarin is very strong. If you take too much of the medication, it will be difficult to stop bleeding from a cut.

If you take too little medication, you increase the chance of a clot forming inside the body leading to serious complications.

To make sure you reach a safe balance between bleeding and clotting, you will regularly have a blood test called International Normalized Ratio or INR.

Work with your healthcare provider to find the right dose for you and remember to take your warfarin exactly as prescribed.