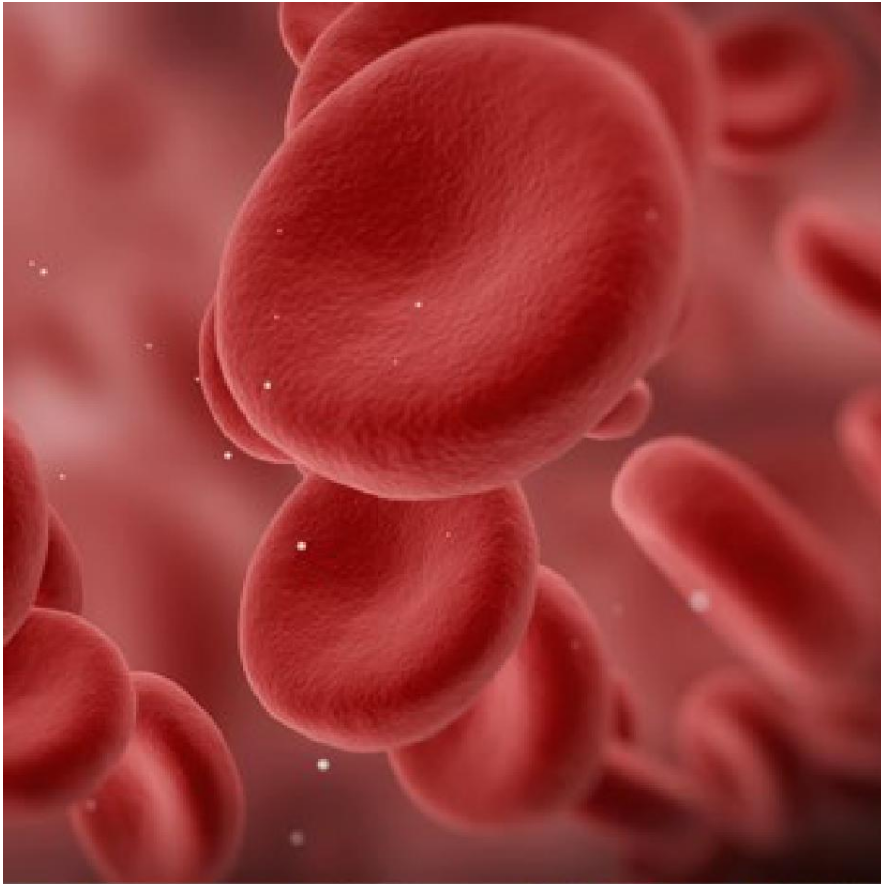




Anticoagulant Drugs: Taking Anticoagulants Safely



Overview

An anticoagulant is a drug that keeps blood cells from sticking together. It keeps new blood clots from forming. It can keep existing clots from getting bigger. But it does put you at risk for uncontrolled bleeding. Let's learn about how to use your drug safely.

Use as Directed

First, follow all the directions for use. Never take any other drugs with it unless your doctor tells you to. Mixing other medications with an anticoagulant can be dangerous.

Tell others

Other people need to know you are taking an anticoagulant. So tell everyone on your healthcare team. Tell your dentist. Wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace to let others know.

Eat and drink safely

An anticoagulant can interact with things you eat and drink. Foods high in vitamin K, for example, can keep your drug from working well. Talk to your doctor to find out what foods and drinks you need to avoid.

Protect Yourself

It's important to avoid injuries, especially cuts. Wear shoes to protect your feet. Shave with an electric razor instead of a blade. Use a toothbrush with soft bristles so you don't irritate your gums. And wear gloves while gardening.

Conclusion

And finally, watch for signs of danger. Watch for bruising, bleeding that doesn't stop, and bloody gums. These can mean a serious problem. For women, a heavy period is a warning sign. Watch for things like headache, dizziness and fatigue. Don't ignore breathing problems or chest pain. Ask your doctor for more information about using your drug safely.

