

Advice on alcohol when taking warfarin

While alcohol can be a source of pleasure and enjoyment, drinking too much or at the wrong time, can cause problems when on warfarin. Alcohol has a marked affect on the action of warfarin.

The important thing is to know where the benefits end and the risks begin!

General advice

We recommend that you should drink the same amount of alcohol each day, thus avoiding big variations in the amount you drink from day to day.

The guide to the amount of alcohol that is both safe to drink daily and good for your general health, is as follows:

No more than 21 units for a man or 15 units for a woman a week.

1 unit of alcohol equals:



- Half pint of ordinary strength pub beer, lager or cider
- Small glass of wine
- Single measure of spirit

Remember that some drinks are stronger than others. The strength of alcoholic drinks is shown on the labels.

Advice on diet when taking warfarin

The following advice will help you to follow a healthy diet, while taking warfarin.

Vitamin K rich foods are generally very nutritious, so aim for consistency in your intake of these foods. For examples see the list over the page.

Suddenly increasing or decreasing the vitamin K in your diet can change how well your warfarin works.

You don't have to avoid them, just eat a balanced diet and a variety of foods.

If your normal pattern is, for example, to have 2 servings of the following foods, **do not** suddenly eat a large amount of them.

Examples of vitamin K rich foods:



Avocado Pear
Broccoli
Spinach
Brussels sprouts
Watercress
Soya bean products
Lettuce (dark green)
Green beans
Green peas
Liver

We recommend that you **do not** make changes in the level of consumption of these foods as stopping, starting or changing will affect the INR value.

For further information and advice

**Contact numbers: 020 7288 5390,
020 7288 3516
(9 am – 5 pm) Monday to Friday.**

The Whittington Hospital **NHS**
NHS Trust

Anticoagulant clinic



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