




Situational Safety: Vitamin K

The maintenance of a consistent diet is a challenge for many patients taking warfarin. The vitamin with the greatest impact on the health of Coumadin[®] (warfarin) patients is vitamin K.¹ Patients taking warfarin should not, however, see vitamin K as “the enemy”. Most foods with vitamin K are healthy food choices, and may play important roles in the body such as healthy bone maintenance.²

Vitamin K is commonly found in green leafy vegetables, but is not limited to vegetables. For example, salad dressings and oils may also contain significant amounts of vitamin K. Vitamin K is not normally listed on product labels, so patients may have a difficult time identifying vitamin K in a certain food. Therefore, patients are encouraged to use the QAS Vitamin K Registry[®], found at www.PTINR.com, to survey the vitamin K content of ~1,000 food products.

Trying to eliminate vitamin K from the diet may be nearly impossible, and is likely not worth the effort. Medical professionals agree that patients can continue to enjoy foods containing vitamin K, as long as they consume a consistent amount of vitamin K from week to week. Patients should avoid drastic changes in vitamin K intake.³

Dietary flexibility and stable INR maintenance are possible if the patient makes consistent choices in foods containing vitamin K, stays in close communication with the health care team, and practices frequent INR monitoring.

Patients are invited to use the free, online vitamin K diary found at www.PTINR.com, where they can enter their meals and a tool calculates Vitamin K levels. The diary is found on the home page behind the following icon: 

Visit: www.PTINR.com

- 1 Ford, S.K., et al. (2007). Prospective study of supplemental vitamin K therapy in patients on oral anticoagulants with unstable international normalized ratio. *Journal of Thrombosis and Thrombolysis* 24 (1), 23-7.
- 2 Cranenberg, E.C.M., et al. (2007). Vitamin K: The coagulation vitamin that became omnipotent. *Thrombosis and Hemostasis*; 98; 120-125.
- 3 Bristol-Myers Squibb Company. (2007). Medication Guide for Coumadin Tablets and Coumadin for Injection [Package Insert]. Princeton, NJ: Bristol-Myers Squibb Company.

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