

Useful Information

NHS 24 Freephone 111
www.nhs24.scot

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk

EMC: www.medicines.org.uk

Note. The internet is a fantastic way to access information. Unfortunately this information can sometimes be misleading. If you are at all unsure ask your healthcare provider.

Notes

Use the space below to write down any questions you might have or to make notes.

Further information and help

For more details contact:

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Macaulay Road
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2AF
Tel. 01851 708141

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website feedback section at: www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk or share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk or 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 or 07814 071868 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.

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Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar
NHS Western Isles

Pharmacy Department

Warfarin - What to expect before you go home



Useful information for patients and their carers once they have started taking Warfarin.

Introduction

This leaflet is aimed at helping patients and their carers understand how your Doctor, Ward Nurses and Ward Pharmacist will prepare you for going home on your new medication.

Decision to Start

The medical team looking after you has made a decision to start you on an oral anticoagulant. This is a tablet you take to thin your blood. This medicine is called **Warfarin**.

Your doctors will have discussed this with you and explained why you have been started on this. There are many different reasons why people need to take Warfarin. If you are unsure why you are taking it please ask the Pharmacist, Doctor or Nurse looking after you.

Loading Dose

Initially you may be given a daily dose which is different to the dose you end up on. This is to load your system with the Warfarin.

You will have blood tests taken some mornings which will show how long it takes your blood to clot. This measurement is called an International Normalised Ratio commonly referred to as an INR.

The INR helps the doctors to decide what dose of Warfarin you need to take to get your INR to the correct level for the condition you are being treated for.

There are always questions when anyone starts taking Warfarin.

Why not write yours in the space on the back of this leaflet and don't forget to ask a member of the team looking after you.

Preparing for Home

You will be given leaflets to read about your treatment with Warfarin.

You will receive two yellow books in a folder - an Oral Anticoagulant Therapy Record book and Important information for patients. These books will contain all the information about who you are, who is looking after you, how you can contact them, why you are taking Warfarin, and how long your treatment is expected to last.

When you leave hospital your INR results will be recorded in here along with the amount of Warfarin you should take. Remember to take this book with you when you visit the GP, Nurse, hospital or Dentist.

You should have all your medicines, including Warfarin, explained to you, what they are for, when you should take them and how much you should take.

When taking Warfarin there are a few lifestyle changes that you may need to be made. These are mentioned in the leaflets and your Pharmacist, Doctor or Nurse will explain them to you before you are discharged.

The person explaining your Warfarin will discuss side effects with you. How common they are, how to recognise them and what action to take.

Warfarin can interact with other medicines and supplements, including those bought over the counter in pharmacies, supermarkets, health food shops or from any other source. Always discuss with your Community Pharmacist or Doctor before taking any new medicines or supplements. If you normally use any medicines or supplements at home that you didn't bring in to hospital with you, discuss them with the Pharmacist looking after you.

Day of Discharge

You should have some written information to take away and had all your questions answered.

You should have had all your medicines explained and know when to take them and how much to take.

You should know when your next INR Blood test is and where to go to get it or if the Nurse is coming to you.

You should have all the information completed in your yellow book including your last INR.

This is very important as your GP needs to know this information also.

You should know how much Warfarin to take every day and when to take it.