

Anticoagulants

Common Use: Anticoagulants reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke and blockages in your blood vessels by preventing blood clots from forming or growing.

Key Tips:

- Other medications may interact with anticoagulants, causing either an increase or decrease in its effects. Be sure to notify your doctor who prescribes your anticoagulant if you start any other new medication, including over-the-counter drugs like aspirin, ibuprofen, and antacids.
- Large doses of Vitamin K (found in green, leafy vegetables, some fish, cabbage, cauliflower) can decrease the effects of anticoagulants. Your doctor will adjust your dosing based on the amount of these foods you normally eat. It is important not to change your diet of these items drastically without talking with your doctor.
- Anticoagulants will cause prolonged bleeding if you injure yourself.
- Your doctor will order routine blood work to periodically check your anticoagulant levels. It is important to have this blood work done as ordered.
- For women during child-bearing years, tell your doctor if you are or plan to become pregnant while taking an antiplatelet.

Common Side Effects with Anticoagulants:

- Delayed clotting/bleeding if you cut yourself
- Stomach upset, bloating or gas
- You may have some bleeding of gums with vigorous tooth-brushing
- Nose bleeds

Warning Signs

Call your doctor if you have any of these signs:

- Hives, rash, itching
- Black & tarry or red & bloody bowel movements
- Bloody vomit
- Vomit that looks like coffee grounds
- Unusual bleeding or bruising
- Prolonged nose bleeds
- Purple patches or bleeding under the skin
- Shortness of breath

If you notice other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

Reference: National Library of Medicine/MedlinePlus @ www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus ; Texas Heart Institute @ www.texasheartinstitute.org