

To understand how well warfarin is working, you will get blood tests to measure how long it takes for your blood to clot. Those lab results are called your Prothrombin Time (PT) and International Normalized Ratio (INR) values.

While you are taking warfarin (for example, Coumadin™ and Jantoven™), the amount of vitamin K you get from the foods you eat can have a significant effect on your INR.

Vitamin K is a nutrient that is NOT listed on food labels. Even though you do not see vitamin K on a food label, the food can still contain vitamin K.

Getting about 90 to 120 micrograms of vitamin K a day helps make your INR more manageable. You can eat more vitamin K than this amount, however, be consistent. Do not eat a lot more or a lot less than your average amount per day.

If you have a big change in what you eat, contact the health care provider managing your warfarin. Your INR may need to be checked and your warfarin dosage adjusted.

Times when diet changes can affect your INR include:

- + **Summer:** More fresh vegetables are available.
- + **Illness:** When you are vomiting, have diarrhea, or are losing weight and eating less.

Serving sizes can affect your vitamin K intake.

Have your INR checked regularly as directed by your health care provider. This is usually at least once a month, but it can be more or less often for some people.

How does vitamin K affect my INR?

Action	Effect on INR	Result
Eating too much vitamin K	Lowers your INR	Can cause unwanted clotting
Not eating enough vitamin K	Increases your INR	Can cause bleeding
Eating varying amounts of vitamin K	Makes INR unstable (goes up or down)	Can cause unwanted clotting or bleeding
Do not avoid vitamin K. A healthy adult needs 90 to 120 micrograms every day. Try to get this amount. It is okay to eat more than that as long as you consistently eat the same amount every day.		

Warning

Some foods can cause a dangerous change in your INR. How these foods affect someone's INR varies by person.

Talk to your health care provider before eating or drinking:

- + Green tea or any products containing green tea (*hot or cold*)
- + Teas made with sweet clover, sweet woodruff or tonka beans
- + Alcohol
- + Herbal teas
- + Cranberry juice
- + Nutritional supplements or herbal supplements
- + Vitamins and minerals
- + Rhubarb
- + Dark chocolate
- + Tobacco

What factors affect the vitamin K content of food?

Serving size

Food lists below show the amount of vitamin K in some common foods and the serving size. If the serving size is ½ cup and you eat 2 cups of that food, you have eaten 4 servings. As a result, you've eaten 4 times the amount of vitamin K.

If you eat the foods listed, eat about the same amount of that food every day. Being consistent with your diet is very important to your health and well-being while on warfarin.

It is easy to eat a large amount of some foods such as spinach. Be aware of serving sizes and **do not eat a large quantity of a vitamin K-containing food at one time.**

Cooking

Be aware that cooking can affect the serving size of some foods. For example, when you cook 6 cups of raw spinach, it becomes ½ cup cooked spinach, but the vitamin K remains the same. Cooking does not eliminate vitamin K from food.

Try to stay away from eating cooked, dark-green, leafy vegetables. If you do eat cooked, darkgreen, leafy vegetables, eat a consistent amount each day.

Medium-Vitamin K Foods: 31 to 90 micrograms

You may enjoy 2 servings each day from this list.

Foods	Serving Size
Asparagus, fresh: cooked, boiled, drained	5 spears
Asparagus, frozen: cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup
Broccoli: raw	½ cup
Cabbage, all types: cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup
Coleslaw: mayonnaise based	½ cup
Cow peas, black eyes frozen: cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup
Endive: raw	½ cup
Swiss chard	½ cup
Fish, i.e. tuna: light, canned in oil, drained	3 ounces
Kiwi: fresh, raw	1 medium
Lettuce, iceberg, crisp head types, i.e. romaine: raw	1 cup
Noodles: egg, spinach, enriched	½ cup
Okra, frozen or fresh: cooked, boiled, drained ½ cup	½ cup
Onions, spring or scallions (includes tops and bulb): raw, chopped	¼ cup
Parsley: raw	½ cup
Sauerkraut: canned, solids and liquids	½ cup
Soybeans: dry roasted	½ cup
Watercress: chopped, raw	½ cup

High-Vitamin K Foods: 91 to 200 micrograms

You may enjoy 1 serving each day from this list as long as you eat this amount **VERY** consistently.

Foods	Serving Size
Broccoli: cooked, boiled, drained	¾ cup
Brussels sprouts: cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup
Lettuce, butterhead: Boston and Bibb types, raw	½ cup
Spinach: raw	1 cup

These food lists are not a complete list of all foods that contain vitamin K. If you would like to check the vitamin K content of many foods, check the USDA website.

The last column in the charts on the website includes the amount of vitamin K content in micrograms.

If you have questions about this information, talk to the health care provider who manages your warfarin.

Very High-Vitamin K Foods: 200 to 400 micrograms

You may enjoy 1 serving each day from this list as long as you eat this amount **VERY** consistently.

Foods	Serving Size
Beet greens: cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup
Collards, frozen or fresh: chopped, cooked	¼ cup
Kale, fresh or frozen: cooked	¼ cup
Spinach, canned or frozen: cooked, drained	¼ cup
Turnip greens: cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup

This material is for your education and information only. This content does not replace medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. New medical research may change this information. If you have questions about a medical condition, always talk with your health care provider.



Lakeland Regional **Health**®