

Health Bulletin

Video Has The Skinny On Blood Thinners

(NAPSA)—Used correctly, a blood thinner can be a lifesaver. However, used improperly, it can pose a threat to the health of the person taking it, leading, in some cases, to uncontrolled bleeding.

More than 4 million Americans take blood thinner drugs to avoid health problems such as blood clots, heart attack and stroke. Regular blood tests can let you know if your blood is clotting properly, and simple precautions, such as wearing gloves when gardening or using sharp tools around the house, can help protect against injury and avoid trips to the emergency room.

Talk To Your Doctor

It's important to make sure that your doctor knows about every medicine you take, including medicines you were taking before you started taking a blood thinner. These medicines can change the way your blood thinner works and your blood thinner can also change the way your other medicines work. This includes other prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal products.

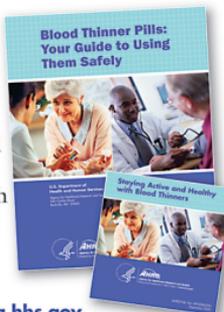
For example, products that contain aspirin may lessen the blood's ability to form clots and may increase your risk of bleeding when you are also taking a blood thinner. Pain relievers, cold medicines and stomach remedies may also interfere with how blood thinners work, so it's important to alert your doctor if you are taking them.

Diet Is Important, Too

The foods you eat on a regular basis can also affect how well your blood thinner works for you. For instance, high amounts of vitamin K might work against some blood thinners, such as warfarin. Ask your doctor if you need to pay attention to the amount of vitamin K you eat.

Free Information on Blood Thinner Pills

- 10-minute video
- 24-page booklet
- Easy-to-understand explanations in English and Spanish about how to use blood thinner pills safely



E-mail AHRQPubs@ahrq.hhs.gov
or call 800-358-9295 and ask for
AHRQ Publication Number 09-0086-DVD (video)
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It's important to make sure that your doctor knows about every medicine you take. They may change the way your blood thinner works.

Foods that contain medium to high levels of vitamin K and can affect how your blood thinner work include asparagus, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, canola oil and kale.

Free Video Guide

To help you better understand how to take blood thinners safely, the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality is offering a free 10-minute video, "Staying Active and Healthy With Blood Thinners," and a 24-page booklet, "Blood Thinner Pills: Your Guide to Using Them Safely."

To order the free DVD and accompanying booklet in English or Spanish, e-mail AHRQPubs@ahrq.hhs.gov or call (800) 358-9295. If you would like to preview the video or booklet online, go to www.ahrq.gov/consumer/btpills.htm.