

Warfarin Treatment for Heart Rhythm Disturbance

Patient Information

Cardiac Catheter Laboratory



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Our ValuesPeople at
the HeartListen and
InvolveKind and
RespectfulOne
Team

Your doctor has diagnosed an irregular rhythm of your heart. This is a common condition occurring in about one in 100 people. On its own it is unlikely to cause a serious problem, but when it exists with certain other conditions, such as high blood pressure or other contributory factors that have an irregular heart rhythm, this may increase the chance of you having a stroke.

There are alternative anticoagulants available as a first line treatment for this heart rhythm disturbance but some patients who have certain types of conditions will need to be prescribed warfarin. Your doctor will discuss the reason why these alternatives have not been used, and warfarin is the choice of drug for your treatment.

The likelihood of a stroke is greatly reduced if you are treated with a drug called Warfarin. Without Warfarin the possibility is that in any year, five patients out of every 100 would suffer a stroke. With Warfarin, this is reduced to one in 100.

Warfarin is a lifelong treatment; it will not have any effect on the way you feel. It works by making the blood less able to clot. For this reason, it requires careful control so that you do not bleed excessively. However, two out of 100 patients on Warfarin may have bleeding episodes of which a quarter may be fatal. This risk is kept low by regular testing of your blood.

It is therefore very important, if you decide to have the treatment, that you take your tablets reliably and

follow the “Do’s and Don’ts” set out here. You will need to attend regular blood monitoring at the anticoagulant Clinic. The appointments will be quite frequent at first but once stabilised; blood tests are needed about every six to eight weeks.

Warfarin is a treatment that has been available for many years and has been used to have a good effect in many thousands of people.

Dos and don’ts

- **Do** take your tablets at the same time every day.
- **Do** eat regular meals.
- **Do** check with your doctor or Pharmacist before taking non-prescription drugs.
- **Do** call your doctor if you experience bruising or bleeding gums when brushing your teeth.
- **Don’t** take more or less than the prescribed amount.
- **Don’t** have excessive or irregular alcohol intake.
- **Don’t** miss your Blood Test appointments.

Please use this space to write any notes or reminders

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

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Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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