

CARE HOME ORAL ANTICOAGULANT SAFETY REMINDER

To support safe monitoring of residents prescribed warfarin or a direct oral anticoagulant (DOAC) e.g. apixaban, dabigatran, edoxaban and rivaroxaban. The points highlighted should be included in the resident's care plan.

THINK **CLOTS**

adherenCe	If the resident misses a dose of their warfarin or DOAC (e.g. if the medication is not available or the resident is refusing their medication), the action to be taken should be agreed with their GP and included in the resident's care plan. NEVER DOUBLE THE DOSE TO MAKE UP FOR A MISSED DOSE.
bLeeding	Monitor for signs of bleeding. Seek medical help from the resident's GP if the resident shows any of the following signs and symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unexpected bleeding ➤ Severe or unexplained bruising (or bruises that get bigger) ➤ Blood in the urine ➤ Coughing or vomiting blood, or vomit that looks like coffee grounds ➤ Black stools or blood in their stools ➤ Unexpected new pain, swelling or discomfort in a joint ➤ Menstrual flow or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal ➤ Severe headache, dizziness or weakness <p>Note Urgent medical attention is necessary in cases of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uncontrollable heavy bleeding (lasts over 10 minutes) such as nose bleeds, bleeding from the gum, bleeding from cuts and scrapes ➤ A fall or injury to their head or face (even if there are no visible signs of injury).
Other medication	Other medication may affect how the anticoagulant works. For residents taking a DOAC: If any new medicines are started or medicines are stopped including herbal remedies, over the counter medicines or vitamin supplements inform their GP. These may have an impact on the resident's renal function. For residents taking a warfarin: If there are any changes to their medication, their anticoagulant appointment may need to be brought forward for their INR to be checked. Inform their GP.
sTroke or blood clots	Monitor for signs and symptoms that might suggest stroke or blood clots. Respond accordingly and seek urgent medical attention. For strokes: sudden weakness/numbness on one side of the body, sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding, sudden vision changes. THINK FAST (Face, Arms, Speech Time) For blood clots: chest pain, shortness of breath, pain and swelling in an arm or leg
Side effects	Monitor for any new or adverse effects. E.g. dyspepsia is a common side effect of the DOACs. Inform their GP.

1. Take care to prevent falls as falls may lead to significant injury.
2. If the resident is eating or drinking less or becomes acutely ill, e.g. has diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting or flu- like symptoms tell their GP. For residents taking a DOAC - it is important that they do not become dehydrated as this can affect their renal function. The INR of residents taking warfarin may be affected.
3. For residents taking warfarin changes in diet such as an increase in green leafy vegetables or alcohol can affect their INR.
4. Monitor for weight loss, as their dose of DOAC may need to be adjusted. Report to the GP residents with a body weight less than 60kg (apixaban and edoxaban) and less than 50kg (dabigatran).
5. The resident should have an anticoagulant alert card or medic alert card. Bleeding from medical and dental procedures may be increased if the resident is taking a DOAC. It is important that other healthcare professionals involved in their care know that they are taking an anticoagulant.