

Staying safe

When taking blood thinning medicine

It's especially important to make sure you don't get injured or hurt when you're taking medicine to thin your blood. When your blood is thin, you have a harder time healing if you cut or bruise yourself.

Here are things you can do to stay safe while taking blood thinners:

- Tell everyone giving you medical or dental care that you're taking a blood thinning medicine.
- If you shave, use an electric razor so you won't be as likely to cut yourself.
- Put a rubber mat and safety rails in your bathtub to help protect you from falling.
- Use a toothbrush with soft bristles.
- Don't use toothpicks or anything sharp to remove food between your teeth.
- If you have corns or calluses, don't try to remove them yourself. Talk to a member of your care team.
- Don't walk barefoot.
- Always wear gloves when you garden.
- When you use the bathroom, check for signs of blood in your urine or bowel movement. Blood can make your urine pink, red, or brown. Blood in your bowel movement can make it look black, or like tar. If you think you might have blood, call a member of your care team.
- If you cut yourself, put pressure on the cut for 10 minutes. If you cut your arm or leg, make sure you sit with your arm or leg raised above your heart. If the bleeding doesn't stop completely after 10 minutes, call a member of your care team.
- If you get a new bruise, draw a line around it. If the bruise gets bigger and goes outside the line, call a member of your care team.
- Keep your activity level about the same from day to day. Getting a lot more, or a lot less, physical activity than usual can change the way your blood clots. If you change your physical activity level, let your care team know.
- Stay away from tobacco smoke. Don't smoke and don't let anyone smoke around you. For information about quitting, call the Quit For Life Program™ at 1-800-462-5327.

Call a member of your care team right away if you have:

- Pain or swelling in your legs or arms for no reason.
- Bruises or red or purple spots on your skin for no reason.
- Severe headache.
- Chest pain.
- A hard time breathing or catching your breath.
- Dizziness or weakness.
- Any injuries, including a fall or blow to your head.
- Diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting.
- Any bleeding including:
 - A cut or wound that won't heal.
 - Blood in your urine. Your urine might look pink or brown.
 - Blood in your bowel movements. Your bowel movement might be black or look like tar.
 - Coughing that brings up blood.
 - Throwing up blood. Your vomit might look like it has coffee grounds in it.
 - Blood from your mouth or gums that doesn't stop right away.
 - Hemorrhoids that bleed.
 - More bleeding than usual during a menstrual period, or bleeding from your vagina for no reason.

Who to call:

Doctor:	Phone
Nurse:	Phone
Pharmacist:	Phone
AMS:	Phone
Consulting Nurse:	
Other:	Phone