



# Blood Thinners and You: A Guide to Blood Thinners and Bleed Risk in Agriculture

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## What are blood thinners?

Blood thinners are important medicines that work by thinning your blood in various ways, some of these medications include:

- Apixaban (Eliquis<sup>®</sup>)
- Aspirin
- Clopidogrel (Plavix<sup>®</sup>)
- Dabigatran (Pradaxa<sup>®</sup>)
- Enoxaparin (Lovenox<sup>®</sup>)
- Fondaparinux (Arixtra<sup>®</sup>)
- Prasugrel (Effient<sup>®</sup>)
- Rivaroxaban (Xarelto<sup>®</sup>)
- Ticagrelor (Brilinta<sup>®</sup>)
- Warfarin (Coumadin<sup>®</sup>, Jantoven<sup>®</sup>)



### **ATTENTION**

Blood thinners can increase your risk of significant bleeding or bruising<sup>1</sup>.

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## Why am I on blood thinners?<sup>2</sup>

They help treat blood clots and/or prevent future clots. Clots can lead to stroke and heart attack; blood thinners reduce your chance of getting these. If you do not know why or how long you are taking a blood thinner, you should ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## Why does this matter?

One of the main side effects of all blood thinners is the high risk of bleeding and bruising<sup>1</sup>.

In 2014, there were 45,138 reported injuries<sup>3</sup> from agricultural workers that resulted in bruising, cuts, punctures, and fractures.

Bleeding could happen from several activities such as, but not limited to:

- Operating heavy machinery
- Handling animals
- Using sharp or simple tools
- Repairing or building structures
- Any activity requiring protective gear

### Signs of concern<sup>1</sup>

- Bleeding from a cut that won't stop after 15 minutes of pressure
- Coughing up blood
- Vomiting red blood
- Vomiting a coffee ground-like material
- Bloody stool
- Black tar-like stool
- Changes in urine color (Red, Orange, Pink, or Brown)
- Black, blue or purple spots under the skin that are becoming darker or larger or that will not go away

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, seek immediate medical attention!

**Go to the hospital or call 911 if you notice any of the above signs!**

## What Can I Do?<sup>1</sup>

- Do not stop taking your blood thinner unless your doctor advises.
- Tell ALL your doctors (dentist, eye doctor, primary care, pharmacist) that you are on a blood thinner.
- Take your medicine at the same times each day. You can use pill boxes or alarms to remind you to take your medication on time.
- If you fall and hit your head, whether or not you see blood, call 911 or have someone drive you to the closest emergency department.
- Report any signs of bleeding to your doctor, do not ignore any signs.
- Do not start new medications, even over the counter, without talking with your doctor or pharmacist first.
- When working, wear appropriate, properly fitting personal protective equipment, including gloves and boots.
- Follow all safety rules and procedures of any vehicle, machine, or facility.
- Use the buddy system or if you work alone make sure you can call someone in an emergency.
- Handle all tasks with caution.

## What Increases Risk of Bleeding?<sup>3</sup>

- Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs), including:
  - ibuprofen, naproxen, meloxicam
- Alcohol Consumption
- Smoking Tobacco

## What Increases Risk of Bleeding with Warfarin?<sup>3</sup>

- Fluconazole (Diflucan<sup>®</sup>)
- Metronidazole (Flagyl<sup>®</sup>)
- Amiodarone (Nexterone<sup>®</sup>)
- Sulfamethoxazole/Trimethoprim (Bactrim<sup>®</sup>)
- Leafy green vegetables
- Grapefruit juice
- Cranberry juice
- Ginseng
- Fish oil
- Garlic
- Green tea
- Multivitamins w/ vitamin K
- Mayonnaise

**Always ask a doctor or pharmacist before starting any new medication, supplement, or vitamin!**

## References

1. Blood Thinner Pills: Your Guide to Using Them Safely. AHRQ. <https://www.ahrq.gov/patientsconsumers/diagnosistreatment/treatments/btpills/btpills.html>. Published September 2012. Revised November 2018. Accessed April 20, 2020.
2. AHA/ACC/HRS, "2019 AHA/ACC/HRS Focused Update of the 2014 AHA/ACC/HRS Guideline for the Management of Patients with Atrial Fibrillation," January 2019.
3. OISPA Adult Occupational Injury Tables. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/laginjury/oispa/injtables.html>. Published April 10, 2018. Accessed November 24, 2020.



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