

Title: So your doctor wants to give you on a blood thinner

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Abstract: Dabigatran is as safe and effective as Warfarin with the additional benefit of not having to consider the multitude of other drug interactions, food interactions that Warfarin has. Therefore, there is no need for aggressive blood monitoring. This pamphlet discusses and compares two types of blood thinners, Warfarin and Dabigatran.

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## So your doctor wants to give you a blood thinner

If you recently had a confirmed blood clot in your leg or in your lungs, your doctor will want to put you on a blood thinner.

Different blood thinners work in several ways, but they all decrease the potential for more clots in your blood.\*

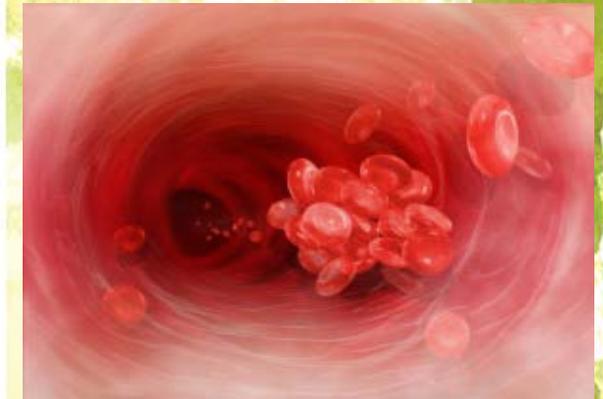


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## A University of Minnesota Primary Care Clerkship Patient Education Tool

This pamphlet discusses two types of blood thinners

1. Warfarin- also known by the brand names of Coumadin or Jantoven.
2. Dabigatran.



The beginning of a blood clot, as visualized through a digital cartoon.\*\*

### *Side Effects of Blood thinners*

1. Bleeding
2. Destruction of skin cells (necrosis)
3. Hair loss (Warfarin)
4. Headache
5. Swelling
6. Feeling Queasy

*Before starting, tell your doctor if*

- + Bruise or bleed easily
- + Have kidney or liver damage
- + Have cancer
- + Have stomach/ nutrition issues

## Warfarin



Checking blood levels of Warfarin\*\*\*

### **Advantages**

1. Cheaper
2. Insurance coverage
3. Older (physicians aware of side effects and other issues)

### **Disadvantages**

1. Many interactions with other medications.
2. Interactions with some drinks.
3. Need to check blood routinely to ensure that Warfarin is at therapeutic levels.

## Dabigatran

### **Advantages**

1. No need to routinely check blood.
2. As safe and effective as Warfarin.
3. Consistent levels of drug in blood stream.

### **Disadvantages**

1. Newer drug, not as well known to doctors
2. Cost
3. Insurance coverage

### **More information/resources**

#### MedlinePlus

1. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/deepveinthrombosis.html>
2. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/pulmonaryembolism.html>
3. <http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/btpills.htm>

### **References/Images**

1. NEJM Volume 361 — December 10, 2009 — Number 24
2. \*<http://images.google.com/images?hl=en&um=1&ie=UTF-8&q=blood+thinners&sa=N&start=40&ndsp=20>
3. \*\*<http://images.google.com/images?hl=en&um=1&ie=ISO-8859-1&sa=1&q=blood+clot>
4. \*\*\*<http://images.google.com/images?hl=en&um=1&ie=ISO-8859-1&sa=1&q=blood+from+fingertip>