

NUTRITION NUGGET #18

Why do some people avoid vegetables with Vitamin K?



Answer: If you take blood-thinning drugs like Coumadin® (warfarin), your doctor may tell you to avoid eating too much leafy greens. Eat your greens in consistent amounts; do not suddenly increase or decrease your intake while on this medicine.

Facts:

- Drugs that prevent blood clotting are used to decrease the blood's ability to form blood clots in blood vessels. These prescription drugs are used to treat deep vein thrombosis, some heart conditions, or prevent clots after a heart attack.
- When a blood-thinner such as Coumadin® is taken while **eating too much foods rich in Vitamin K**, the Vitamin K may interfere with this drug's ability to prevent blood clots.
- **Vegetables cooked or raw, rich in Vitamin K, to limit are:**

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|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Kale | Spinach | Brussels sprouts |
| Parsley | Collard greens | Broccoli |
| Mustard greens | Chard | Green tea |
| Avocado | Escarole | Romaine lettuce |
| Green Leafy lettuce | Swiss Chard | Cabbage |



- Keep your intake of foods rich in Vitamin K the same each day. **Instead of avoiding greens, keep your intake consistent.** For example if you usually have a spinach salad daily, do not stop eating it entirely. Or if you plan to eat only ½ cup of broccoli per day, don't eat 2 cups the next day.
- While on Coumadin® also avoid taking alcohol and dietary & herbal supplements unless you health care provider approves.

Apply: A participant asks you for a list of Vitamin K foods to avoid. What questions can you ask?

References: <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442477646&terms=warfarin>; http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/patient_education/drug_nutrient/coumadin1.pdf; <http://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/warfarin-oral-route/proper-use/drug-20070945>. Images: <http://rawedibles.blogspot.com/2013/05/10-vegetables-you-can-add-to-smoothies.html>; <http://thespinachgirl.com/health/coumadin-vitamin-k-green-vegetables/>; <http://www.vitamindeals.info/articles/vitamin-k.html>. Accessed on: 04/09/14.