

Community Pharmacy Anticoagulant Service

COVID-19

Information about your INR test

During the Covid-19 pandemic we want to keep your warfarin testing (INR) as safe as possible. Now that we have level 4 restrictions, you will need to contact your pharmacy before going for an INR check to ensure they are open and able to carry-out the test.

If you are unwell, especially if you have a fever, a sore throat, cough or difficulty breathing, you MUST NOT visit your pharmacy. Call Healthline or your GP for advice.

If your INR test is due, contact your pharmacy (via phone or email) to discuss what to do. It is usually safe to delay your warfarin test for a few days.

Longer testing Intervals

Normally we recommend that people on long-term warfarin should have a blood test (INR) every 4 to 6 weeks. However, we do not want you to visit your pharmacy more frequently than you need to. For some people we believe it is safe to test less frequently over the next few months. If you have been on the same dose of warfarin for several months and your INR test is in the safe range most of the time, it may be possible to wait up to 3 months between tests. This should be discussed with your pharmacist.

If you need a test

- **Contact your pharmacy first** to check that they are open and able to test.
- **Arrange to visit the pharmacy at a quiet time so you are not waiting with other people.** Contact your pharmacy to find the best time to go, your pharmacist may be able to offer you a specific time, so you are not waiting.
- **Go on your own.** If you need somebody to attend with you, only take one person.
- **Wash your hands.** You will be asked to wash your hands before the test, possibly more thoroughly than normal.
- **Do not be offended** if your pharmacist is wearing gloves and a mask, or if you are asked to wear a mask.
- **Stay a short time only.** It may be an opportunity for you to get supplies from the pharmacy, but do not spend longer there than necessary.

Will my warfarin be affected by the virus infection?

If you become unwell your warfarin control may be affected. We normally recommend more frequent testing. You should discuss additional tests with either your doctor or pharmacist. If you have symptoms and need a test you will need to have this done in the correct facility.

DO NOT COME to the pharmacy. Contact Healthline 0800 358 5453.

If you have any other questions, please contact your pharmacist.

Remember that regularly washing your hands and staying away from other people is the best way to keep safe.

Dr Paul Harper, MD, FRCP, FRACP.
Haematologist

Approved by the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand