

Cranberry Juice**Warfarin (eg, Coumadin)****Significance****Onset**

- Rapid
 Delayed

Severity

- Major**
 Moderate
 Minor

Documentation

- Controlled Trial(s)**
 Noncontrolled Trial(s)
 Case Report(s)
 Product Information
 Theoretical

Effects

Increased risk of severe bleeding, including hemorrhage.

Mechanism

Unknown.

Management

Because **warfarin** has a narrow therapeutic index, limit or avoid concurrent ingestion of **cranberry juice**.

Discussion

The Committee on Safety of Medicines (United Kingdom) has received reports of at least 7 cases of possible increases in warfarin activity in patients ingesting cranberry juice concurrently.¹ One patient whose INR increased dramatically (greater than 50) died of hemorrhage 6 weeks after he started drinking cranberry juice.¹ Until more information is available regarding how much cranberry juice was ingested, the frequency of consumption, the duration of the effects of cranberry juice on warfarin activity, and other factors that may have predisposed patients to bleeding, advise patients to limit or avoid concurrent ingestion of warfarin and cranberry juice. An elevated INR (11) accompanied by postoperative bleeding problems (eg, several episodes of frank hematuria via the catheter and bright red postrectal bleeding from the anastomosis site) occurred in a patient receiving warfarin.² On ward rounds, the patient was observed drinking almost 2 L/day of cranberry juice. Two weeks previously, the patient's general practitioner recommended the juice to alleviate recurrent urinary tract infections. The patient was advised to stop drinking cranberry juice, and, after 3 days, the INR stabilized at 3. Major bleeding and an elevated INR (over 18) was reported in a 71-year-old man on a stable dose of warfarin (18 mg/week) 2 weeks after he started drinking 24 oz of cranberry juice daily.³ In a double-blind, randomized, crossover study, 7 men with atrial fibrillation and on stable warfarin doses for 3 months ingested cranberry juice 250 mL or cranberry placebo for 7 days.⁴ Compared with the placebo, cranberry juice ingestion did not affect the INR.

¹ Suvarna R, et al. Possible interaction between warfarin and cranberry juice. *BMJ*. 2003;327(7429):1454.

² Grant P. Warfarin and cranberry juice: an interaction? *J Heart Valve Dis*. 2004;13(1):25-26.

³ Rindone JP, et al. Warfarin-cranberry juice interaction resulting in profound hypoprothrombinemia and bleeding. *Am J Ther*. 2006;13(3):283-284.

⁴ Li Z, et al. Cranberry does not affect prothrombin time in male subjects on warfarin. *J Am Diet Assoc*. 2006;106(12):2057-2061.



= Avoid Combination



= Use with Caution



= Minimal Risk