What to do when sick while taking warfarin

Getting sick may affect your INR and increase your chances of bleeding.

Call your anticoagulation clinic if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever higher than 101° F
- Chills for more than one day
- Vomiting (throwing up) for more than one day
- Loss of appetite or no eating for more than two days
- Diarrhea for more than one day
- Congestive heart failure that might be getting worse. This includes increased difficulty breathing or walking, sudden weight gain, and swelling in your feet.
- Viral or bacterial infection and you need antibiotics

What medication can I take if I am sick?

Always call your anticoagulation clinic before starting other medications. This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

For fever, headaches, or mild aches and pains, you can take a small amount of acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Do not take more than 2,000mg in 24 hours. You can either take 6 regular strength 325mg tablets or 4 extra-strength 500mg tablets.

What medications can I not take when sick?

Some medications may increase your risk of bleeding when taking warfarin. Call your anticoagulation clinic before using any of the following medications:

- Alka-Seltzer®
- Aspirin
- Excedrin®
- Ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®)
- Naproxen (Aleve®)
- Pepto-Bismol®