

Anticoagulation: What Adolescents and Young Adults Need to Know

Drugs, alcohol, body piercings, tattoos and birth control have serious health implications when you are using an anticoagulant.

Having health issues is a really good excuse for not wanting to do things that you would otherwise be pressured to do by peers. My experience has been that nobody questions you when you use it as an excuse, and the peer pressure to do whatever quickly stops.

-Katie, age 18

What are the risks?

Your personal and medical history should impact your decisions about drugs, alcohol, tattoos and birth control. These decisions have health implications and are especially relevant to adolescents and young adults who are using an anticoagulant, because it can affect your bleeding or clotting risk.

You can make the safest decisions for you by staying informed of the risks. You can have a confidential conversation with your health care team at any time without your parents. Although your health care team always encourages you to involve your parents, these conversations can occur in private and the content of the discussion will remain between you and your healthcare provider.

What effect does alcohol have?

Drinking alcohol increases your risk of bleeding. Don't drink alcohol while using an anticoagulant.

What effect does tobacco use have?

Smoking cigarettes or using other tobacco products increases your risk of getting a blood clot. Don't use tobacco products while using an anticoagulant.

Can I have body piercings or tattoos?

Using an anticoagulant increases your risk of bleeding during piercings or tattoos at the time of the procedure. Please talk to your doctor about your specific risks or if adjustments to your anticoagulant dosage may help reduce the risk.

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To Learn More

- Anticoagulation Service
206-987-6262
1-888-987-2000
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.



What do women need to know?

Menstrual cycles can be heavier when using anticoagulants. Let your provider know if this is a discomfort or you are worried.

Using certain hormone-based birth control can increase your risk of having a blood clot. Please check with your doctor about other birth control that is right for you.

Planning a family in the future must be discussed with your doctor. Special arrangements will be made for your anticoagulant care.