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Menstruation and Anticoagulation

Children and adolescents are prescribed anticoagulants (also known as “blood thinners”) for a variety of reasons. Bleeding remains the most important side effect when on anticoagulation medication such as warfarin, enoxaparin, tinzaparin, rivaroxaban, or apixaban. Being on an anticoagulant can affect bleeding during menstruation and lead to heavier and longer periods. It is important for people who menstruate to understand when bleeding during menses requires follow up or urgent assessment.

What can I expect during menstruation when taking an anticoagulant?

You may experience heavier periods that last longer compared to when not taking an anticoagulant. This may mean changing a pad or tampon more frequently.



Tracking menstrual symptoms can be helpful in ensuring accurate information is shared with your health care team. For example: tracking days between periods, days of bleeding, number and type of pads/tampons/cups used in your heaviest day, size of period clots and if you have spotting between periods.

General Advice with Heavy Menstrual Bleeding

- If periods become unmanageable or persist over 7 days, you may want to talk to your healthcare provider to discuss a referral to an adolescent gynecologist to help manage symptoms.
- If menstrual bleeding is heavy but no symptoms of light headedness, dizziness or feeling faint, KidClot recommends talking with your primary care provider or a gynecologist about non-estrogen contraceptive options to lessen period bleeding and duration.
- Estrogen contraceptive options can contribute to clotting risk. So, we advise avoiding contraceptives with estrogen.

If you feel like your menstrual bleeding is impacting your daily life at school/work, please reach out to your anticoagulation team to discuss options.

When should I be concerned?

If you experience the following symptoms during your menstrual period, please present to an emergency department to be seen by a health care provider.

- Lightheadedness, dizziness, pale colour or feeling faint while menstruating
- Bleeding through a “Super” pad or tampon within 1-2 hours