

Anticoagulants

Nursing

What each anticoagulant group does, its monitoring and its bleeding risk.

The mechanism decides the test. The bleeding assessment is the same for all of them.

Groups and monitoring

Warfarin — vitamin K antagonist, INR

Heparin infusion — APTT or anti-Xa

Low molecular weight heparin — usually none

Direct oral anticoagulants — renal function

Antiplatelets act differently, not on clotting

Assess and report

Bruising, gum and nose bleeding

Blood in urine, stool or vomit

New or worsening headache

Falls, and any head injury at all

Interacting drugs, foods and supplements

Educational reference. Targets, reversal and peri-procedure rules are drug-specific and set locally. Report suspected bleeding immediately.