

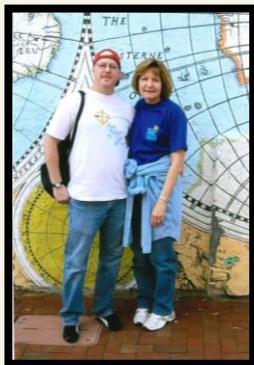
GET TO KNOW OUR STAFF

Who is that friendly voice on the phone when you call the Anticoagulation Clinic?

Most likely it is Terri Zimmerman, our Anticoagulation Clinic Assistant who has been with us for about 3 years.

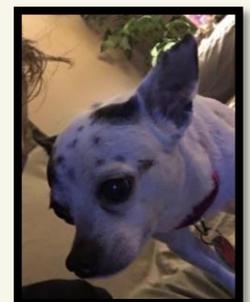
Terri is an invaluable employee that keeps the pharmacists organized and up to date with current calls. She is often busy tracking down lab results, and organizing and sending out new lab orders. On any given day, she may receive and make a hundred or more phone calls.

Terri has lived in this area her whole life. She attended Thompson Institute of Technology for two years for Computer Programming and worked at Hershey Foods for 23 years prior to coming to Penn State Health.



Pictured above: Terri Zimmerman with her beautiful grandchildren

She is married and resides in Palmyra with her husband Mark and their rescue dogs, Emerson and Roxie. They have 2 married sons and four grandchildren that live close by. She is involved with the children's ministry at her church and teaches monthly.



TIPS FOR TAKING BLOOD THINNERS

There are a lot of things to remember and consider when you're prescribed warfarin. What dose do I take each day? When do I check my INR? How much broccoli have I eaten this week? Have I been started on a new medication and have I told my pharmacist? Here are some tips to help you!

- **Know your medications**

- There are many medications that can affect warfarin and your INR. If a medication is started, changed or stopped, it is important to let the Coumadin Clinic know so we can assess if it will impact your INR. Keeping an updated medication list in your purse or wallet of all of the prescription, over-the-counter (OTC) and herbal medications that you are taking is a great way to have this information readily available.

- **Avoid bumps and falls**

- Warfarin affects how quickly your blood clots, which is important in managing the condition for which you are prescribed warfarin. Unfortunately, this also makes it harder for your body to stop bleeding if you have an injury. Therefore, try to avoid activities that put you at risk for falling, opting for ones like walking, jogging and/or swimming. If you do experience a fall that involves hitting your head, contact your doctor ASAP (even if you feel fine) as there could be bleeding going on inside your head. Additionally, if you fall or injure yourself and have excessive bleeding that won't stop, call 911 immediately and get to an emergency room.

- **Get your INR checked regularly**

- Getting your INR checked is important to make sure that your warfarin dose is safe and working to prevent a clot from forming. If your INR is too low, you are at an increased risk of a clot forming; but, if your INR is too high, you are at an increased risk of bleeding (the usual INR range is 2-3, but some patients have different ranges as determined by their doctor). There are a number of things that can affect your INR such as diet, illness, other medications and changes in physical activity; therefore, it is important to get your INR checked as frequently as instructed by the Coumadin Clinic.

- **Be consistent with what you eat**

- The amount of vitamin K-containing foods you eat can affect your INR level. In order for your body to form a clot, it depends on clotting factors that are made from vitamin K. Warfarin works by inhibiting vitamin K so your body is less likely to form a clot. Therefore, eating more salads, dark greens or other vitamin K-containing foods than usual will work against warfarin, resulting in a lower INR. Conversely, if you eat less vitamin K-containing foods than usual, your INR will be higher. This does not mean that you need to avoid greens – rather, be consistent with how often you eat them from week to week.

- **Be prepared**

- Being on warfarin puts you at risk for bleeding more easily. Using a soft-bristled tooth brush for brushing your teeth and/or an electric razor for shaving are two ways to try and minimize bleeding. In addition, keep bandages and other first aid products at home, in your purse, and/or in your car in case of injury.

- **Wear medical alert jewelry**

- It is important for everyone that takes care of your medical needs to know that you are on warfarin. In case of an emergency, wearing a medical alert bracelet or necklace will let health care providers know that you are on warfarin. These can be purchased through medical supply companies and engraved with your information. The Anticoagulation Clinic also has free rubber wrist bracelets available (pictured below).



SPRING 2018

WARFARIN AND TRAVEL

Have you made travel plans for this season? Traveling while taking warfarin is possible for many patients who want to get away. Whether you wish to go to the local beach, or venture afar, it is important to be prepared for your medical needs.

Please inform the Anticoagulation Clinic (ACC) of your travel plans. We can help plan INR checks and medication needs with your trip in mind. If you have an extended stay away from home, we can work with you to have a local lab check your INR and we can manage your regimen from Hershey. We recommend that you always keep the ACC contact information on you so that you can call or email us while you are away.

Most importantly, **remember to take your warfarin and other medications with you.** When flying, medications may undergo security screening by TSA attendants and should be clearly labeled to facilitate this screening process. Therefore, it is suggested to travel with your prescription bottles rather than pill boxes alone. It is also suggested to take an extra supply with you just in case there are unexpected travel changes; however, if you run out of pills or lose your medication, know that it is possible to refill your medication(s) at a local pharmacy. If you are able, take your medication bottle with you, and the pharmacist can transfer your prescription. If you need a new prescription while away, please contact the ACC.

With vacation often comes changes in exercise and diet. This can alter your INR. It is essential to keep the same routine that you have at home. Be mindful of the amount of vitamin K in the foods you are consuming and pay attention to food choices and portions. When eating out, try to order foods that you normally eat, and substitute side dishes if possible. Some restaurants will even prepare your meal according to your requests.

Lastly, **be aware of local emergency services.** Know where hospitals are located and how to access them. This will give you peace of mind during your stay. Take it easy and enjoy your travels!

SPRING 2018

PATIENT APPRECIATION

February 14 was not just for Cupid this year.

Patients that visited the Anticoagulation Clinic were treated to some pampering with their appointment.

We gave away lip balm, tissues, and hand cream to patients visiting our Point of Care(Fingerstick Clinic).

Thank you for letting us take care of you!

RASPBERRY CHICKEN BREASTS

4 servings (2mcg of vitamin K per serving)

1 ½ lb. Chicken breast, skinless, boneless (4 pieces)
2 Tbsp. Butter
¼ cup Raspberry preserves, seedless
2 Tbsp. Balsamic Vinegar

Sauté the chicken breast in butter until just barely done. Slide the chicken to the side of the skillet.

Add the jam and vinegar, stir until the jam is melted and mixed with the vinegar, toss the chicken in the mixture to coat.

Serve the chicken with the sauce poured over the top.

NUTRITION PER SERVING:

Calories 291
Fat 5.8 g
Cholesterol 114
Sodium 162 mg
Protein 42
Carbohydrates 12 gm
Fiber 0

NOSE BLEEDS, medically known as EPISTAXIS

Nose bleeds, also known as epistaxis, are a common condition in patients taking warfarin. Most nose bleeds stop by themselves, but when prescribed warfarin, it may take longer or may require a doctor's visit. The nose has many blood vessels, which can be exposed when the skin that normally protects them cracks or falls off. Nose bleeds can start from the front of the nose, or the back of the nose. The ones starting in the back of the nose are more difficult to control. Nose bleeds have many causes, including trauma, swelling, and some medications such as steroid containing nasal sprays. In the winter, low humidity caused by home heating systems is a common cause. Nose bleeds can also be caused by dry climates.

What can you do to prevent nose bleeds? Using saline nasal sprays or saline nasal gel is a good way to prevent the nose from drying out. These products hydrate the skin in and around the nose, which helps to prevent cracking and nose bleeds. White petroleum jelly may also be used as a barrier skin protectant, but should be avoided in patients who use nasal cannulas for oxygen. Avoiding hot showers and hot and spicy foods can also help to prevent nose bleeds. Using a humidifier in the house can help, since home heating systems often create dry conditions.

If you do get a nose bleed, there are several ways it can be stopped. To stop the bleeding, you can squeeze the nose shut by placing one finger on either side of your nose, and pinching them together. Avoid tilting your head backwards if possible. This process will stop the bleeding, but it may take up to 5 to 10 minutes. If this does not help, contact your doctor for instructions on treatment, as there are several options the doctor can offer at their office. After a nose bleed, avoid forcefully blowing or rubbing the nose until it is completely healed, which can take several days.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Anticoagulation Clinic is now listed in the **PATIENT PORTAL!**

When accessing your records through the patient portal, look for the Anticoagulation Clinic listing in the area where you would communicate to providers. This is how to reach us there.

Why enroll in the Penn State Health Portal?

Here are some of the many features of this system:

- Use secure messaging with your care team
- Manage appointments – real-time scheduling is available for select appointment types
- View test results
- Review medical history
- Renew prescriptions
- Manage family member accounts (with proper consent)
- Smartphone apps available for iOS and Android

Please visit pennstatehershey.org/myhealth for details on how to use website features, and to log in to your personalized website.

OTHER WAYS TO REACH US:

Call the ANTICOAGULATION CLINIC any time at 717-531-5312 or

Toll-free at 1-800-243-1455, ext. 5312

Email us any time:

anticoagulationclinic@pennstatehealth.psu.edu

EDITOR'S NOTE: Let us know of any topics of interest for our next edition.

The Penn State Hershey Anticoagulation Clinic is available for fingerstick appointments Monday through Friday.

A simple fingerstick will give INR results right away!



Shown above is Natalie Treese, PharmD, taking a fingerstick blood sample at the Nyes Rd office.

NYES ROAD HOURS FOR POINT OF CARE (Fingersticks)

First appointment: 8:00 a.m.

Last appointment: 3:00 p.m.

HOPE DRIVE HOURS FOR POINT OF CARE (Fingersticks)

First appointment: 7:45 a.m.

Last appointment: 4:45 p.m.

Please call us if interested.

Call us any time: 717-531-5312,

Toll-free: 800-243-1455, ext. 5312



PennState Health
Milton S. Hershey Medical Center



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PO Box 859
Hershey, PA 17033-0859

PA

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Harrisburg, PA
Permit 1200

Return Service
Requested

ONE PATIENT AT A TIME

CONTACT US:

717-531-5312

(OR 1-800-243-1455 EXT. 5312)

Monday through Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

In case of emergency, please call 911.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Please send your comments to Lisa Barletta, MBA, RPh
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