

# NURSING GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF INR RESULTS/COUMACARE PLUS

Please use the following guidelines when addressing INR results. These guidelines are for the nurses.

1. Use the established NWOCC algorithm when addressing INR results. The algorithm is similar to a sliding scale, which serves as a physician order. Whenever you do not follow the algorithm, a reason must be listed in the notes for that result. Physicians in the office may be consulted by the nursing staff whenever there is a question. Please document accordingly.
2. Whenever an INR is above 6.0, for all ranges, or if the INR is below 1.5 for valve replacements (2.5-3.5 goal), a physician must be notified. Again, please document which physician was contacted, and what orders were received.
3. An alert list must be kept for each Protime office. The alert list provides the protime nurses with a list of patients that need their INR drawn due to a high risk situation. This list must be addressed daily. Patients that belong on the alert list include:
  - INR's above 5.0 for all therapeutic ranges
  - INR's below 1.5 for valve patients (2.5-3.5 range)
  - Patients with special surgical needs (i.e. bridging/lovenox, etc)
  - New patients/new to coumadin or taking over from other office
  - Patients with bleeding problems
  - Patients with critical med changes
  - Confused patients that have no help
4. **CRITICAL STEP:** When processing INR's, the demographic notes must be checked every time, for every INR. Physician orders and important clinical information is listed in this section, including home draws and cardioversion/procedural information. Skipping this check, results in missed physician orders.
5. While making entries into the Coumacare system, be sure that all of the information that you have entered is correct, and complete, before you save the entry. Many entries have missing INR results, no notes, or missing/incorrect doses. If it is not documented, it was not completed.

6. Doses and tab sizes/types must be checked with each INR. Document that this was reviewed in your note. Each INR entry requires a note with this information, at the minimum.
7. Check to be sure that you are using the most current dosing algorithm. The last updated was issued 4/20/04.
8. If you experience any errors or problems with the Coumacare Plus system (i.e. unable to change a dose, duplicate patients, etc) please notify someone to fix the problem. Do not leave a malfunctioning account for the next nurse to repair.
9. For patients just starting coumadin, please remember to check the INR's twice a week, until they have become stable for 2 weeks (4 stable results). Then check the INR weekly for 2 weeks, then follow the algorithm. Some patients are sensitive to coumadin and may experience wide INR swings.
10. QA reviews will be conducted weekly, on a random basis, for all offices, to ensure continuity of care for our patients.
11. Please review the "Medical Assistant Guidelines for Management of Normal INR Results." The Protime Nurses will assist the Medical Assistants by reviewing situations, providing direction and/or taking over the INR, if appropriate.