

## ANTICOAGULANT THERAPY

### WHAT THIS TEST IS FOR.

Your doctor has prescribed anticoagulant therapy to help keep your blood from clotting. To see if the drug is working properly or if your dosage needs to be adjusted, regular blood tests are required. The test is called “prothrombin time”.

### WHAT ELSE YOU SHOULD KNOW.

This test is important to you because too much medication may cause bleeding and too little may not prevent clotting.

Any medications containing ASA may upset your anticoagulant therapy. Ask your doctor about alternatives.

More than one alcoholic drink per day may be dangerous while taking anticoagulants.

Anticoagulant therapy can damage the fetus in the early stages of pregnancy. Reliable birth control is therefore recommended for women taking anticoagulants.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP.

**Take your anticoagulant medication at the same time each day.**

**When possible, come to the laboratory for testing at the same time of day.**

If you arrive before 10 a.m., test results will usually reach your doctor the same day so your dosage can be adjusted that day if necessary.

**Always tell a new doctor that you are taking an anticoagulant.** This is particularly important if a new medication is prescribed.

**Before taking any over-the-counter medication, check with the pharmacist to make sure it won't interfere with your anticoagulant.**

**Tell your dentist that you take an anticoagulant.** Your dose may need to be adjusted by your doctor before dental surgery, including extractions.

By following these simple steps, you can avoid unnecessary repeat visits to the laboratory and help us make better use of scarce health care resources.