Prevalence of drug-drug interactions of warfarin prescriptions in South Africa

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT ................................................................. 1  
1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS .............................................................. 3  
1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES ............................................................ 4  
  1.3.1 General research objective .............................................. 4  
  1.3.2 Specific research objectives ............................................. 4  
    1.3.2.1 Phase 1: Literature review ....................................... 4  
    1.3.2.2 Phase 2: Empirical Investigation .............................. 5  
1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ..................................................... 5  
  1.4.1 Phase 1: Literature review .............................................. 5  
    1.4.1.1 Literature study ......................................................... 5  
  1.4.2 Phase 2: Empirical investigation ..................................... 6  
    1.4.2.1 Research design .......................................................... 6  
    1.4.2.2 Data source and study population ............................. 6  
    1.4.2.3 Research measurements .......................................... 6  
    1.4.2.4 Data analysis .............................................................. 7  
    1.4.2.5 Ethical considerations .............................................. 7  
1.5 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS ......................................................... 7  
1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY ............................................................... 7  

## CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF WARFARIN AND DRUG-DRUG INTERACTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................ 9  
2.2 THE BACKGROUND OF WARFARIN ......................................... 9  
  2.2.1 HISTORY ........................................................................ 9  
  2.2.2 PHARMACOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION ......................... 10  
  2.2.3 INDICATION .................................................................... 10  

Table of Contents
2.2.4 PHARMACOKINETICS ................................................................. 11
  2.2.4.1 Chemistry and stability .................................................... 11
  2.2.4.2 Absorption ................................................................. 12
  2.2.4.3 Distribution ................................................................. 13
  2.2.4.4 Metabolism ................................................................. 13
  2.2.4.5 Warfarin resistance ....................................................... 26
  2.2.4.6 Elimination ................................................................. 29
  2.2.5 PHARMACODYNAMICS ..................................................... 31
  2.2.5.1 Mechanism of action .................................................... 31
  2.2.5.2 Side-effects ................................................................. 34
  2.2.5.3 Dosage and monitoring ............................................... 40
  2.2.6 INTERACTIONS .............................................................. 50
    2.2.6.1 Introduction ........................................................... 50
    2.2.6.2 Mechanisms of drug interactions .............................. 53
    2.2.6.3 Pharmacokinetic interactions .................................... 53
    2.2.6.4 Pharmacodynamic interactions ................................. 62
  2.3 CLINICAL PROBLEM AREAS ............................................... 63
    2.3.1 Adverse drug events .................................................... 64
    2.3.2 Polypharmacy ............................................................. 64
    2.3.3 Significance ratings of drug-drug interactions .............. 65
  2.4 OTHER ANTICOAGULANTS .................................................... 72
    2.4.1 VITAMIN K ANTAGONISTS ......................................... 75
    2.4.2 HEPARIN AND HEPARIN DERIVATIVES ....................... 75
    2.4.3 DIRECT THROMBIN INHIBITORS ................................ 76
    2.4.4 ANTIPLATELET DRUGS .............................................. 77
    2.4.5 FACTOR XA INHIBITORS .......................................... 79
    2.4.6 FIBRINOLYTIC AGENTS ............................................. 80
    2.4.7 ENZYME INHIBITORS ............................................... 80
  2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY ............................................................ 82

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION ....................................... 83
  3.1 AIM ..................................................................................... 83
  3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES .................................................... 83
    3.2.1 GENERAL RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ............................. 83
    3.2.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES .............................................. 84
3.2.2.1 Empirical Investigation ................................................................. 84
3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY........................................................................ 84
   3.3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN........................................................................... 84
      3.3.1.1 Pharmacoepidemiology ............................................................... 84
      3.3.1.2 Drug utilisation review (DUR) ...................................................... 85
      3.3.1.3 The necessity of DUR ................................................................. 85
      3.3.1.4 Types of DUR studies ................................................................. 87
         3.3.1.5 Cross-sectional studies ............................................................. 87
   3.3.2 DATABASE ......................................................................................... 87
      3.3.2.1 Fields ......................................................................................... 88
   3.3.3 STUDY POPULATION ......................................................................... 89
   3.3.4 CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS ............................................................ 89
   3.3.5 RESEARCH MEASUREMENTS .......................................................... 90
      3.3.5.1 Prevalence .................................................................................... 90
      3.3.5.2 Prescribed daily dose (PDD) ......................................................... 90
   3.3.6 DATA ANALYSIS .............................................................................. 92
   3.3.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS .................................................................. 93
      3.3.7.1 Average value (mean) ................................................................. 93
      3.3.7.2 Standard deviation .................................................................... 94
      3.3.7.3 Confidence interval .................................................................. 95
      3.3.7.4 Cohens's d-value ..................................................................... 96
   3.4 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS .......... 97
   3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .............................................................. 98
   3.6 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION .... 98
   3.7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ........................................ 98
   3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY .......................................................................... 98

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION................................................ 99

4.1 CLARIFICATION WITH REGARD TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS ................................................................. 100
4.2 THE GENERAL PRESCRIBING PATTERNS OF MEDICINE ON THE MEDICINE CLAIMS DATABASE ........................................ 100
   4.2.1 GENERAL PRESCRIBING PATTERNS ............................................. 100
   4.2.2 GENERAL PRESCRIBING PATTERNS OF WARFARIN MEDICINE ITEMS .... 102
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .......... 146

5.1 CONCLUSIONS ................................................................. 146
  5.1.1 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE LITERATURE REVIEW ................. 146
  5.1.2 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION ............. 149
5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS ............................................................. 154
5.3 LIMITATIONS ................................................................. 155
5.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY ......................................................... 155
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Compounds incompatible with solutions of warfarin sodium............... 11

Table 2.2: Drugs metabolised by the P450 system that influence the metabolism of S-warfarin and the P450 enzyme subtypes involved in their metabolism..................... 16

Table 2.3: The P450 enzyme subtypes that catalyse both S-warfarin and R-warfarin and the different metabolites that result from them.......................................................... 19

Table 2.4: Drugs metabolised by the P450 system that influence the metabolism of R-warfarin and the P450 enzyme subtypes involved in their metabolism.................. 20

Table 2.5: Summary of the hydroxywarfarins that are substrates for the glucuronidation in humans and the UGT-isoforms involved in their glucuronidation. 24

Table 2.6: The UGT-isoforms involved in the phase II metabolism of warfarin and the other compounds which they metabolise........................................................................ 26

Table 2.7: Example of the table in the warfarin label to predict the individual dose of warfarin based on clinical an genetic factors................................................................. 29

Table 2.8: Blood clotting factors................................................................................. 32

Table 2.9: The three different groups of bleeding and their examples.......................... 35

Table 2.10: An example of a warfarin dosing nomogram............................................ 42

Table 2.11: An example of a warfarin dosing nomogram and suggested dose adjustments to achieve the desired INR.................................................................................. 42

Table 2.12: The difference in the daily dose of warfarin between age groups and between males and females in an elderly population......................................................... 50

Table 2.13: The enzymes involved in the metabolism of warfarin and the drugs that induce these enzymes........................................................................................................ 57

Table 2.14: The enzymes involved in the metabolism of warfarin and the drugs that inhibit these enzymes........................................................................................................ 58

Table 2.15: A list of all the inducers and inhibitors of P-glycoprotein............................. 61

Table 2.16: Significance ratings of drug interactions defined by their severity and documentation level......................................................................................................................... 66

Table 2.17: A list of all the drugs that potentially interact with warfarin and the assigned significance ratings of these interactions............................................................ 67

Table 2.18: All the drugs that have a potential interaction with warfarin and the significance ratings of these drugs as adapted from Hansten & Horn (2011)............. 71
Table A1.4: Number of prescriptions according to gender for the total database (2005-2010).................................................................177

Table A1.5: Number of medicine items claimed per gender for the total database (2005-2010).................................................................178

Table A1.6: The average number of prescriptions per patient according to gender for the total database (2005-2010).................................................................179

Table A1.7: The frequency and significance rating of the drugs co-prescribed with warfarin for the total database (2005-2010).................................................................180

Table A1.8: Frequency and significance rating of drugs co-prescribed with warfarin according to age group.................................................................180

Table A1.9: Frequency of the top 10 co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 1.................................................................180

Table A1.10: Frequency of warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 1.................................................................181

Table A1.11: Frequency of warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 2.................................................................182

Table A1.12: Frequency of the top 10 warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 2.................................................................184

Table A1.13: Frequency of warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 4 and 5.................................................................184

Table A1.14: The top 10 drugs co-prescribed with warfarin.................................................................184

Table A1.15: The top 5 drugs co-prescribed with warfarin.................................................................185

Table A1.16: The frequency of different aspirin doses.................................................................185

Table A1.17: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and high risk aspirin doses.................................................................185

Table A1.18: Frequency of high risk aspirin doses according to age group.................................................................186

Table A1.19: Summary of the effects of aspirin when co-prescribed with warfarin.................................................................187

Table A1.20: The frequency of different thyroxine doses.................................................................188

Table A1.21: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and thyroxine doses.................................................................188

Table A1.22: Frequency of thyroxine doses according to age group.................................................................189

Table A1.22: Frequency of thyroxine doses according to age group (continued).................................................................190

Table A1.23: Summary of the effects of thyroxine when co-prescribed with warfarin.................................................................191

Table A1.24: Frequency of different amiodarone doses.................................................................192

Table A1.25: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and high risk amiodarone doses.................................................................192
Table A1.26: Frequency of high risk amiodarone doses according to age group.....193

Table A1.27: Summary of the effects of amiodarone when co-prescribed with warfarin..................................................................................................................194

Table A1.28: The frequency of different simvastatin doses.............................................195

Table A1.29: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and simvastatin doses.........................................................................................195

Table A1.30: Frequency of simvastatin doses according to age group..........................196

Table A1.31: Summary of the effects of simvastatin when co-prescribed with warfarin................................................................................................................197

Table A1.32: The frequency of different celecoxib doses.................................................198

Table A1.33: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and celecoxib doses....................................................................................................198

Table A1.34: Frequency of celecoxib doses according to age group.............................199

Table A1.35: Summary of the effects of celecoxib when co-prescribed with warfarin.................................................................................................................200
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Summary of all the metabolites formed from the metabolism of S-warfarin and the enzymes involved in this ................................................................. 15

Figure 2.2: The major sites of hydroxylation of S-warfarin catalyzed by CYP450 to produce hydroxylated metabolites ................................................................. 15

Figure 2.3: Illustration of trans- and cis-dehydrowarfarin, which is formed from the metabolism of S-warfarin by CYP3A4 ................................................................. 16

Figure 2.4: Summary of all the metabolites formed from the metabolism of R-warfarin and the enzymes involved in this metabolism ......................................................... 18

Figure 2.5: The major sites of hydroxylation of R-warfarin catalysed by CYP450 to produce hydroxylated metabolites ................................................................. 19

Figure 2.6: A schematic representation of warfarin and the acetonyl side chain which is reduced by the NADPH-dependent carbonyl reductase ........................................ 22

Figure 2.7: Illustration of the sites on the hydroxywarfarin molecule where glucuronidation takes place ....................................................................................... 25

Figure 2.8: The vitamin K cycle and the sites of action of VKOR .......................................................................................................................... 28

Figure 2.9: The coagulation cascade ............................................................................. 32

Figure 2.10: The link between the vitamin K cycle and the γ-carboxylation of glutamate residues ................................................................................................. 34
Figure 2.11: Schematic representation of the mechanisms of drug interactions

Figure 2.12: A broad classification of current and new anticoagulants with the trade names of those anticoagulants currently on the South African market

Figure 2.13: Platelet aggregation and the sites of action of antiplatelet drugs

Figure 2.14: The complete coagulation cascade and the sites of action of the anticoagulants currently available on the local market

Figure 3.1: Graphical representation of the data analysis process

Figure 4.1: Organogram of the empirical investigation
LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 4.1: The PDD of warfarin according to prescribing physicians ...................... 120

Graph 4.2: PDD of warfarin according to gender .......................................................... 121

Graph 4.3: The PDD of warfarin according to age group for the total database (2005-2010) ................................................................................................................................ 122

Graph 4.4: Number of and significance ratings of drugs co-prescribed with warfarin ......................................................................................................................................... 123

Graph 4.5: The frequency and significance ratings of drugs co-prescribed with warfarin according to age group .............................................................................................................................................................................. 124

Graph 4.6: The top 10 drugs co-prescribed with warfarin with a significance rating of 1 .............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 125

Graph 4.7: Frequency of warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 2 .............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 126

Graph 4.8: The top 10 drugs co-prescribed with warfarin with a significance rating of 2 .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 126

Graph 4.9: Frequencies of warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 4 and 5 .............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 128

Graph 4.10: The top 10 drugs co-prescribed with warfarin .......................................... 129

Graph 4.11: The top 5 drugs co-prescribed with warfarin ............................................ 130

Graph 4.12: The frequency of different ranges of aspirin doses .................................. 131
Graph 4.13: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and high risk aspirin dose ranges ................................................................. 132

Graph 4.14: High risk aspirin doses according to age group ................................................ 133

Graph 4.15: The frequency of different thyroxine doses .................................................. 134

Graph 4.16: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and different thyroxine dose ranges ................................................................. 135

Graph 4.17: Dose ranges of thyroxine according to age group ........................................... 136

Graph 4.18: The frequency of different amiodarone doses ................................................ 137

Graph 4.19: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and high risk amiodarone dose ranges ................................................................. 138

Graph 4.20: High risk amiodarone doses according to age group ....................................... 139

Graph 4.21: The frequency of different simvastatin doses ................................................ 140

Graph 4.22: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and simvastatin dose ranges ................................................................. 141

Graph 4.23: Simvastatin doses according to age group ..................................................... 141

Graph 4.24: The frequency of different celecoxib doses .................................................... 142

Graph 4.25: Comparison of the frequencies of different warfarin doses and celecoxib dose ranges ................................................................. 143

Graph 4.26: Celecoxib doses according to age group ....................................................... 144

Graph A1.1: Frequency of warfarin co-prescribed drugs with a significance rating of 1 ............................................................................................................. 183
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ABSTRACT

Title: Prevalence of drug-drug interactions of warfarin prescriptions in South Africa.

Keywords: Warfarin, drug-drug interactions, anticoagulant, vitamin K antagonist, drug utilisation review, private health care sector, prescribed daily dose (PDD), pharmaceutical benefit management company.

Background: Warfarin is an anticoagulant that is used for the prophylactic and therapeutic treatment for a wide range of thrombo-embolic disorders. The prescribing and monitoring of warfarin therapy is challenging due to the fact that warfarin exhibits numerous interactions with other drugs and a variety of factors that influence the dosing of warfarin.

Objective: The general objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence of drugs prescribed with warfarin that may have a potential drug-drug interaction (DDI) with warfarin.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional, observational or qualitative study that was conducted on medicine claims data of a pharmaceutical benefit management company for patients receiving warfarin therapy for a six year period, ranging from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2010. Drug products that were co-prescribed with warfarin were also identified from the medicine claims database. The total number of prescriptions for all drug products during the study period were analysed and compared to the warfarin dataset. This was done by means of the SAS 9.1® computer package (SAS Institute, 2004). The total number of prescriptions and medicine items claimed from the database during the study period were respectively 49 523 818 and 118 305 941. Potential DDIs between warfarin and co-prescribed drugs were identified and classified according to a clinically significant rating. The clinically significance ratings of potential DDIs are described in three degrees of severity, identified as major, moderate and minor (Tatro, 2011:xiv).

Results: The database consisted of 427 238 warfarin prescriptions and 427 744 warfarin medicine items, which represented 0.9% of the total number of prescriptions and 0.4% of total number of medicine items. The total number of patients who claimed warfarin prescriptions through the database represented 0.9% (n=68 575) of the total number of patients who claimed prescriptions in the total database (2005-2010). General practitioners prescribed the highest frequency of warfarin medicine items, representing 58.3% (n=249 202) of the total number prescribed. The age group that claimed the highest
frequency of warfarin prescriptions (n=327 592, 76.6%) and the highest frequency of warfarin medicine items (n=327 984, 76.7%) was age group 4 (consisting of patients 59 years and older). The distribution between females and males regarding warfarin prescriptions claimed (n=205 999, 48.2%; n=221 117, 51.8%) and warfarin medicine items claimed (n=206 232, 48.2%; n=221 390, 51.8%) were almost equal. General practitioners prescribed the highest average PDD (7.01 mg ± 9.86 mg) of warfarin medicine items. Paediatric cardiologists prescribed the lowest average PDD (4.61 mg ± 1.29 mg) of warfarin medicine items. A d-value of 0.1 indicates that there is no practical difference of the average PDD between general practitioners and paediatric cardiologists. The average PDD of warfarin medicine items between females (6.60 mg ± 9.06 mg) and males (6.74 mg ± 8.41 mg) was almost equal. The age group who was prescribed the highest average PDD was age group 2 (consisting of patients 20 years to 39 years old) (7.42 mg ± 7.42 mg). Age group 4 (consisting of patients 59 years and older) (6.50 mg ± 8.90 mg) was prescribed the lowest average PDD of warfarin medicine items. A d-value of 0.1 indicates that there is no practical difference of the average PDDs of warfarin medicine items between these two age groups.

The results revealed that drugs with a significance rating (SR) of 1 (n=155 066, 43.3%), 2 (n=30 128, 8.4%), 4 (n=137 144, 38.3%), and 5 (n=36 144, 10.1%) were co-prescribed with warfarin in the six year study period. The five drugs that was co-prescribed with warfarin most frequently was aspirin (n=48 903, 13.6%), thyroxine (n=33 954, 9.5%), amiodarone (n=25 056, 7.0%), simvastatin (n=19 070, 5.3%) and celecoxib (n=10 794, 3.0%). These five drugs have a SR of 1.

Conclusions: This study showed that the top five drugs most frequently prescribed with warfarin are aspirin, thyroxine, amiodarone, simvastatin and celecoxib. These drugs can potentially interact with warfarin. The potential interactions of these drugs are rated with a significance rating of 1. This concludes that drugs that can potentially cause life threatening effects and permanent damage are commonly co-prescribed with warfarin. Clinical data concerning the INR or PT must be obtained in order to evaluate whether or not warfarin therapy is changed when a potentially interacting drug is co-prescribed. The age of the patients as well as the duration of warfarin treatment should also be obtained in order to assess whether warfarin treatment is changed with the progression of age.
OPSOMMING

Titel: Voorkoms van geneesmiddelinteraksies op warfarien voorskrifte in Suid-Afrika

Sleutelwoorde: Warfarien, geneesmiddel-geneesmiddelinteraksies (GGI), antikoagulante, vitamiene K antagoniste, medisyneverbruikevaluering, private gesondheidssorgsektor, voorgeskrewe daaglikse dosering (VDD), farmaseutiese voordele bestuursmaatkappy.

Agtergrond: Warfarien is 'n antikoagulant wat gebruik word vir die profilaktiese en terapeutiese behandeling van 'n wye verskeidenheid trombo-embolie toestande. Die voorskrif en kontroliering van warfarinterapie is uitdagend vanweë die feit dat warfarien verskeie interaksies met ander geneesmiddels kan hê en 'n wye verskeidenheid van faktore die dosering van warfarien beïnvloed.

Doelwit: Die algemene doelwit van die studie is om die voorkoms van moontlike interaksies met geneesmiddels wat saam met warfarien voorgeskryf word te onderzoek.

Metodes: 'n Deursnee-, waarnemings- of kwalitatiewe studie is onderrneem met betrekking tot die medisyne-eisdata van 'n farmaseutiese voordele bestuursmaatskappy vir pasiënte wat warfarinterapie ontvang het tydens 'n ses jaar periode vanaf 1 Januarie 2005 tot 31 Desember 2010. Geneesmiddels wat saam met warfarien voorgeskryf is is ook uit die medisyne-eisdatabasis geidentifiseer. Die totale hoeveelheid voorskrifte vir alle medisyne-items gedurende die studietydperk is ook geanaliseer en met die warfarien datastel vergelyk. Dit is gedoen met behulp van die SAS 9.1® rekenaarpakket (SAS Instituut, 2004). Die totale hoeveelheid voorskrifte en medisyne-items wat ge-eis is vanaf die databasis gedurende die studietydperk was onderskeidelik 49 523 818 en 118 305 941. Potensiële GGI tussen warfarien en mede-voorskrewe geneesmiddels is geidentifiseer en geklassifiseer met 'n kliniese beduidende gradering. Die kliniese beduidende graderings of potensiële GGI is beskryf na gelang van drie grade van erns naamlik belangrik, gemiddeld en onbelangrik (Tatro, 2011:xiv).

Resultate: Die databasis het 427 238 warfarien voorskrifte en 427 744 warfarien medisyne-items opgelewer, wat 0.9% van die totale hoeveelheid voorskrifte verteenwoordig het, en 0.4% van die totale hoeveelheid medisyne-items. Die totale hoeveelheid pasiënte wat warfarien voorskrifte deur die databasis ge-eis het verteenwoordig 0.9% (n=68 575) van die
totale hoeveelheid pasiënte wat voorskrifte ge-eis het in die totale databasis (2005-2010). Algemene praktisyns het die meeste warfarien medisyne-items voorgeskryf, naamlik 58.3% (n=249 202) van die totaal. Die ouderdomsgroep wat die meeste warfarien voorskrifte ge-eis het (n=327 592, 76.6%) en die meeste warfarien medisyne-items ge-eis het (n=327 984, 76.7%) is ouderdomsgroep 4 (bestaande uit pasiënte 59 jaar en ouer). Die verspreiding tussen vroue en mans met betrekking tot die warfarien voorskrifte wat ge-eis is (n=205 999, 48.2%; n=221 117, 51.8%) en die warfarien medisyne-items wat ge-eis is (n=206 232, 48.2%; n=221 390, 51.8%) was byna dieselfde. Algemene praktisyns het die hoogste gemiddelde VDD (7.01 ± 9.86) van warfarien geneesitems voorgeskryf. Pediatriese kardioloë het die laagste gemiddelde VDD (4.61 ± 1.29) van warfarin medisyne-items gehad. 'n D-waarde van 0.1 dui aan dat daar geen praktiese verskil is met betrekking tot die gemiddelde VDD tussen algemene praktisyns en pediatriese kardioloë nie. Die gemiddelde VDD van warfarien medisyne-items tussen vroue (6.60 ± 9.06) en mans (6.74 ± 8.41) was byna gelyk. Die ouderdomsgroep wat die hoogste gemiddelde VDD gehad het was ouderdomsgroep 2 (7.42 ± 7.42). Ouderdomsgroep 4 (6.50 ± 8.90) het die laagste gemiddelde VDD van warfarien medisyne-items ge-eis. 'n D-waarde van 0.1 dui geen praktiese betekenisvolle verskil in die gemiddelde VDD's van warfarien medisyne-items tussen hierdie twee ouderdomsgroepe nie.

Die resultate het getoon dat geneesmiddels met 'n beduidendheidsgradering (BG) van 1 (n=155 066, 43.3%), 2 (n=30 128, 8.4%), 4 (n=137 144, 38.3%), en 5 (n=36 144, 10.1%) saam met warfarien voorgeskryf is gedurende die ses jaar periode. Die vyf geneesmiddels wat saam met warfarien voorgeskryf is sluit in aspirien (n=48 903, 13.6%), tiroksein (n=33 954, 9.5%), amiodaroon (n=25 056, 7.0%), simvastatien (n=19 070, 5.3%) en celecoxib (n=10 794, 3.0%). Hierdie vyf middels het elk 'n BG van 1.

**Gevolgtrekkings:** Hierdie studie het gewys dat die vyf geneesmiddels wat die meeste saam met warfarien voorgeskryf is, die volgende insluit: aspirien, tiroksein, amiodaroon, simvastatien en celecoxib. Hierdie geneesmiddels kan potensieel met warfarien reageer, met 'n potensiële interaksiegradering met 'n beduidendheid van 1. Dit beteken dat geneesmiddels wat potensieel lewensbedreigende effekte of permanente skade kan doen algemeen saam met warfarin voorgeskryf word. Kliniese data met betrekking tot die Internasionale Genormaliseerde Verhouding of protrombientyd moet bekom word om te evaluer of warfarienterapie aangepas word wanneer 'n geneesmiddel wat 'n potensiële interaksie met warfarien het, saam met warfarien voorgeskryf word. Die ouderdom van die pasiënt en die duur van warfarienterapie moet ook bekom word om te asseesseer of warfarien terapie aangepas word soos wat die pasiënt ouer word.