

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) and Pulmonary Embolism (PE)

What is a DVT or PE?

A **DVT** is a blood clot in the veins in your leg or arm.

A **PE** is a blood clot in your lungs. This type of blood clot may form in your leg and then travels through the bloodstream to your lungs.

**After your surgery or a period of bedrest,
you have an increased risk of forming a blood clot.**

DVT or PE occurs in 100 to 180 patients for every 100,000 individuals every year.

What are the signs and symptoms of a DVT or PE?

Signs and symptoms of a DVT:

- pain or tenderness deep in the back of your calf or inside your thigh
- swelling or warmth in your arm or leg
- redness on your arm or leg

Signs and symptoms of a PE:

- shortness of breath
 - chest pain
 - passing out
 - coughing up blood
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How is a DVT or PE diagnosed?

The doctor will review your medical history and do a physical exam.

You may have:

- blood tests, called a D-dimer
- an ultrasound done on your legs
- an x-ray using dye of your legs
- a lung scan or CT scan of your chest

How are DVT and PE treated?

Blood thinner medication is used to stop clots from getting bigger and to prevent new clots from forming:

- You may be given Heparin or Low Molecular Weight Heparin. This medication can be given by injection or through an intravenous drip. You may have to stay in hospital if you need intravenous blood thinners or your doctor needs to monitor you closely.
- You may take tablets called Warfarin (Coumadin) or Rivaroxaban (Xarelto).

You may need to wear compression stockings and rest with your leg up to relieve swelling.

To relieve pain, ask your health care provider which medication is best to use.

Follow your treatment plan

- Take your blood thinner medication as prescribed to prevent getting another clot.
 - Have blood tests as directed by your doctor or nurse to make sure the blood thinner medication is working well.
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Tell other health care providers

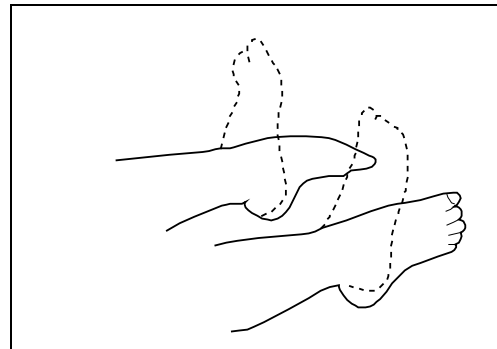
- Tell other health care providers such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists or chiropractors, that you have had a DVT or PE and whether or not you are taking blood thinners.

When taking a long trip

- Drink lots of water before and during your trip.
- Take a walk and stretch every hour.
- Move your lower legs and ankles often when sitting and avoid crossing your legs. Pump your ankles often.

Ankle pumping:

- move your ankles up and down
- move in circles, both directions



Watch carefully for the signs and symptoms of DVT and PE. Although it is rare, it is possible to have another blood clot, even if you are taking blood thinners.

When should I get help?

Get help if you:

- have new, unexplained chest pain lasting more than 5 to 10 minutes
- have severe shortness of breath
- have a fast heart beat lasting more than 5 to 10 minutes
- have new or increased shortness of breath
- are coughing up blood
- have worsening of your symptoms
- have new leg or arm pain or swelling that you are concerned about

Call 911. For less urgent cases, call your family doctor or the Thrombosis Service.