

Learn the risk factors for blood clots, deep venous thrombosis, and pulmonary embolism.

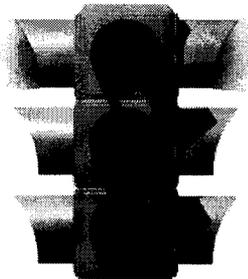


National Blood Clot Alliance

(877) 4 NO CLOT
www.stopthecLOT.org

Stop The Clot®

CLOTTING RISK: What You Need to Know

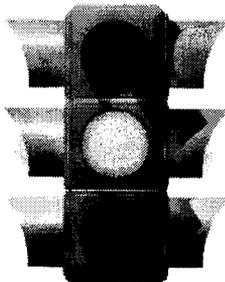


Blood Clots

Stop!

Discuss with your doctor now.

- HIGH RISK**
- Hospital stay
 - Major surgery, such as abdominal/ pelvic surgery
 - Knee or hip replacement
 - Major trauma: auto accident or fall
 - Nursing home living
 - Leg paralysis

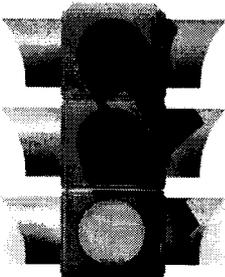


Blood Slows

Caution!

Talk with your doctor about risk.

- MODERATE RISK**
- Older than age 65
 - Trips over 4 hours by plane, car, train or bus
 - Active cancer/chemotherapy
 - Bone fracture or cast
 - Birth control pills, patch, or ring
 - Hormone replacement therapy
 - Pregnancy or recently gave birth
 - Prior blood clot or family history of a clot
 - Heart failure
 - Bed rest over 3 days
 - Obesity
 - Genetic/hereditary or acquired blood clotting disorder



Blood Flows

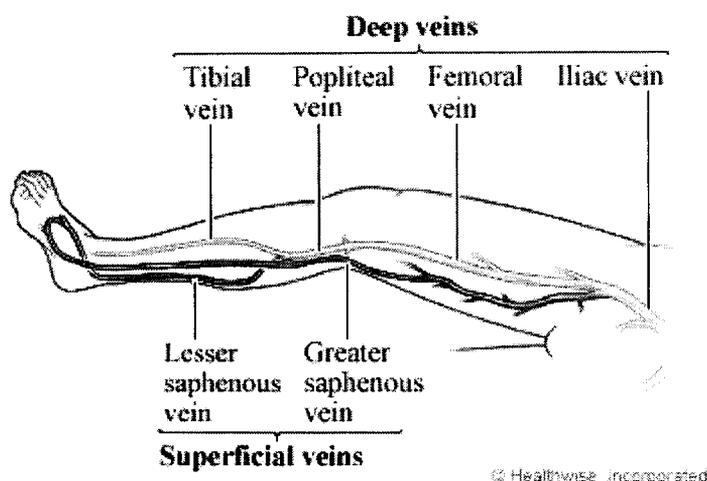
Go!

Stay alert to any change in risk.

- AVERAGE RISK**
- Active
 - Younger than age 40
 - No history of blood clots in immediate family
 - No conditions or illnesses that heighten clotting risk

Learning About Deep Vein Thrombosis

What is deep vein thrombosis?



A deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a blood clot in certain veins of the legs, pelvis, or arms. The clot is usually in the legs. DVT may damage the vein and cause the area to ache, swell, and change color. DVT also can lead to sores.

DVT in these veins needs to be treated because the clots can get bigger, break loose, and travel through the bloodstream to the lungs. A blood clot in a lung can cause death.

Blood clots can form in the veins when you are not active for a long period of time. For example, they can form if you need to stay in bed because of a health problem or must sit for a long time on an airplane or in a car. Surgery or an injury can damage your blood vessels and cause a clot to form. Cancer also can cause DVT. And some people have blood that clots too easily, which is a problem that may run in families.

A risk factor is something that makes you more likely to develop a disease.

Here are some major risk factors for DVT:

- You have surgery.
- You have to stay in bed for more than 3 days (such as in the hospital).
- Your blood is likely to clot because of an injury, cancer, or inherited condition.

Here are some minor risk factors for DVT:

- You take birth control hormones.
- You are pregnant.
- You are in a car or airplane for a long trip.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of DVT may include:

- Swelling in the affected area.
- Redness and warmth in the affected area.
- Pain or tenderness. You may have pain only when you touch the affected area or when you stand or walk.

If your doctor thinks you may have DVT, you will probably have an ultrasound test. You may have other tests as well.

How can you prevent DVT?

- Exercise your lower leg muscles to help blood flow in your legs. Point your toes up toward your head so the calves of

your legs are stretched, then relax and repeat. This is a good exercise to do when you are sitting for long periods of time.

- Get out of bed as soon as you can after an illness or surgery. If you need to stay in bed, do the leg exercise noted above every hour when you are awake.
- Use special stockings called compression stockings. These stockings are tight at the feet with a gradually looser fit on the leg. Many doctors recommend that you wear compression stockings during a journey longer than 8 hours.
- Take breaks when you are on long trips. Stop the car and walk around. On long airplane flights, walk up and down the aisle hourly, flex and point your feet every 20 minutes while sitting, and drink plenty of water.
- Take blood-thinning medicines after some types of surgery if your doctor recommends it. Blood thinners also may be used if you are likely to develop clots.

How is DVT treated?

Treatment for DVT usually involves taking blood thinners. These medicines are given ~~through a vein (intravenously, or IV)~~ or as a pill. You will have blood tests often so your doctor can see how well the blood thinners are working.

SC

Subcutaneously

Your doctor also may suggest that you prop up or elevate your leg when possible, take walks, and wear compression stockings. These measures may help reduce the pain and swelling that can happen with DVT.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.

Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if

you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.



Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **X941** in the search box to learn more about
"Learning About Deep Vein Thrombosis".

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Learning About How to Prevent Blood Clots

What is a blood clot?

A blood clot is a clump of blood that forms in a blood vessel, such as a vein or an artery. If a clot gets stuck in a blood vessel, it can cause serious problems like a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or a pulmonary embolism.

A DVT is a blood clot in certain veins of the legs, pelvis, or arms. It most often occurs in the legs. Blood clots in these veins need to be treated, because they can get bigger, break loose, and travel through the bloodstream to the heart and then to the lungs. This causes a pulmonary embolism.

A pulmonary embolism is a sudden blockage of an artery in the lung. Blood clots in the deep veins of the leg are the most common cause of a pulmonary embolism. In many cases, the clots are small. They may damage the lung. But if the clot is large and stops blood flow to the lung, it can be deadly.

What increases your risk for blood clots?

Some of the things that can increase your risk for a blood clot include:

Slowed blood flow

When blood doesn't flow normally, clots are more likely to develop. Reduced blood flow may result from long-term bed rest, such as after a surgery, injury, or serious illness. Or it may result from sitting for a long time, especially when traveling long distances.

Abnormal clotting

Some people have blood that clots too easily or too quickly. Problems that may cause increased clotting include:

- Having certain blood problems that make blood clot too easily. This is a problem that may run in families.
- Having certain health problems, such as cancer, heart failure, stroke, or severe infection.
- Being pregnant. A woman's risk of getting blood clots increases both during pregnancy and shortly after delivery or after a cesarean section.
- Using hormonal forms of birth control or hormone therapy.
- Smoking.

Injury to the blood vessel wall

Blood is more likely to clot in veins and arteries shortly after they are injured. Injury can be caused by a recent medical procedure or surgery that involved your legs, hips, belly, or brain. Or it can be caused by an injury, such as a broken hip.

What can you do to prevent blood clots?

After any procedure or event that increases your risk

- **Take a blood-thinning medicine (called an anticoagulant)** as directed if your doctor prescribes one.
- **Exercise your lower leg muscles** to help keep the blood moving through your legs. Point your toes up toward your head so the calves of your legs are stretched, then relax. Repeat. This is a good exercise to do when you are sitting for long periods of time.
- **Get up out of bed** as soon as you safely can or as soon as your doctor says it's okay after an illness or surgery. If you can't get out of bed, you can do the leg exercise described above. Try to do this leg exercise every hour when you are awake. This will help keep the blood moving through your legs. If you are in the hospital and need to stay in bed, your doctor may have you use a special device that inflates and deflates knee-high boots to help keep blood from pooling in your legs.
- **Use compression stockings** if your doctor prescribes them. These are specially fitted stockings that may prevent blood clots by keeping blood from pooling in your legs.

When you travel

- **Take breaks when you travel.** On long car trips, stop the car and walk around every hour or so. On long bus or train

rides or plane flights, get out of your seat and walk up and down the aisle every hour or so.

- **Do leg exercises while you are seated.** For example, pump your feet up and down by pulling your toes up toward your knees and then pointing them down.

If you already have a risk of blood clots, talk to your doctor before taking a long trip. Your doctor may want you to wear compression stockings or take blood-thinning medicine.

Take care of your body

- **Be active.** Try to get 30 minutes or more of activity on most days of the week.
- **Don't smoke.** Smoking can increase your risk of blood clots. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines.
- **Check with your doctor** about whether you should use hormonal forms of birth control or hormone therapy. These may increase your risk of blood clots.

When should you call for help?

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You have symptoms of a blood clot in your lung (called a pulmonary embolism). These may include:
 - Sudden chest pain.
 - Trouble breathing.
 - Coughing up blood.

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have symptoms of a blood clot in your arm or leg (called a deep vein thrombosis). These may include:
 - Pain in the arm, calf, back of the knee, thigh, or groin.
 - Redness and swelling in the arm, leg, or groin.



Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

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