



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

BLOOD CLOTS
DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

What is a deep vein thrombosis?

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a blood clot that forms inside a vein, usually in the legs. Such a clot is dangerous because it can break and move through your bloodstream. A clot can also block blood vessels in your lungs.

How does it form?

DVT can form when blood moves more slowly than normal. When you are in bed or sit for a long time (such as during a long plane flight) your blood moves slowly. Blood pools in the large veins of the legs and clots can form. Also, injury major illness and some medicines increase the chance for blood to clot.

What are the symptoms?

- Swelling in the calf, ankle, foot or thigh
- Increased warmth of the leg
- Redness
- Pain in the leg
- Night leg cramps
- Bluish color of the skin on the legs or toes

How is a blood clot treated?

- Blood thinners
- Bed rest
- Blood tests

How can I take care of myself?

- Take your medicine as ordered
- Do not cross your legs or ankles for long periods of time
- Change position often when in bed
- Flex your feet up and down every hour.
- If you have any pain or discomfort in your legs, notify the nurse or your doctor as soon as possible.
- Move your legs as much as possible.
- Wear supportive stockings, if your doctor orders them.
- After you have been sick or have had surgery, start walking as soon as possible
- Get regular exercise with your doctor's ok
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Stop smoking

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