Venous Thromboembolism: Know the Risks, Signs & Symptoms of Blood Clots

Know the Lingo About Blood Clots

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT): Blood clot located in a deep vein, usually in a leg or arm.

Pulmonary embolism (PE): Blood clot that has traveled from a deep vein to a lung.

DVT and PE are also known as VTE (venous thromboembolism).

Blood Clots Affect Many People

900,000 EACH YEAR

VTE affects as many as 900,000 Americans each year.

100,000 PEOPLE DIE EACH YEAR

As many as 100,000 people die of blood clots each year.

Everyone Is at Risk. Some Factors Can Increase This Risk.

Hospitalization and Surgery

One-half of blood clots occur during or soon after a hospital stay or surgery.

Being Immobile

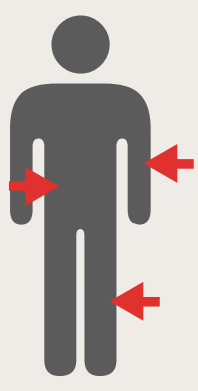
Not moving for long periods of time (for example, extended bed rest or extended travel).

Other Risk Factors

- Older age
- Overweight or obese
- Family history of VTE
- Recent or recurrent cancer
- During and just after pregnancy
- Estrogen-based medicine such as hormonal birth control or hormone replacement therapy
- Injury and trauma

Know the Signs, Symptoms and Risk Factors

DVT Symptoms



- Swelling
- Pain
- Tenderness
- Redness of the skin

PE Symptoms

- Difficulty breathing
- Faster than normal or irregular heartbeat
- Chest pain or discomfort, which usually worsens with a deep breath or coughing
- Coughing up blood
- Very low blood pressure, lightheadedness, or fainting

What You Can Do to Prevent Death or Complications of a Blood Clot

Know your risks and recognize symptoms.

If you have any symptoms, see your doctor as soon as possible. Blood clots can be safely treated by your doctor.

Before any surgery, talk with your doctor about blood clots.

Tell your doctor if you have risk factors for blood clots.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information, please visit
cdc.gov/ncbddd/dvt/index.htm

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