

Why you need to know about clots

If a blood clot forms in your leg, it can affect blood flow, and cause severe pain and swelling.

It can also cause permanent damage to your leg. If a blood clot forms, some of it may travel through your veins to your lungs and block their blood supply.

Without blood, your lungs cannot send oxygen to the rest of your body. You may have trouble breathing or, in rare cases, you may die. Studies have shown that treatment will reduce the chance of developing a blood clot.

The following list shows the main things that put you at risk of developing Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) and Pulmonary Embolism (PE) while you are in the hospital:

- major trauma (physical injury)
- critical care
- hip or knee replacement
- prolonged surgery
- stroke
- heart failure
- cancer
- severe lung disease
- severe infection or inflammation
- having DVT in the past.
- smoking

You have been given this brochure because you may be at risk of forming a blood clot in your legs or lungs.

More information:

If you require more information or have questions about blood clots in your legs or lungs, ask your health care provider.



Labrador - Grenfell
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Reducing the Risk of Blood Clots



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What your health care team will do

After you arrive at hospital, the risk of a blood clot forming in your legs or lungs will be assessed. Your level of risk will depend on:

- your age
- the reason you are in hospital
- any other health problems you have or had in the past

Ask your doctor or nurse about your level of risk of developing a blood clot.



If you are at risk, your health care team will discuss treatment

options with you. Treatment may include:

- gently exercising your feet and legs in bed
- getting out of bed and walking as soon as possible.
- wearing compression stockings
- taking pills or injections to help prevent a blood clot
- Some of these treatments are not suitable for some people

If you are at high risk, your healthcare team may recommend more intensive treatment.

Ask your health care provider what treatments they recommend for you.

What you must do

You must help your health care team reduce the risk of a blood clot forming.

While you are in hospital you must:

- avoid sitting or lying in bed for long periods
- walk as often as your doctor advises
- make sure you get any tablets or injections your doctor has prescribed to reduce your risk
- keep your compression stockings on
- drink plenty of fluids
- if you are a smoker, quit smoking

Before you leave hospital, ask your doctor or nurse what to do when you go home.

Find out:

- how long you should wear your compression stockings
- whether you must take any medications
- what physical activities you need to do
- whether you have to avoid alcohol
- what else you and your family can do to reduce the risk of a blood clot

What to watch for

If you experience any of the following while you are in hospital, let a nurse know immediately:

- pain or swelling in your legs
- pain in your lungs or chest
- difficulty breathing

If you have any of these symptoms after you have left the hospital, contact the NL Healthline at 1-888-709-2929 immediately or go to the Emergency Department.

