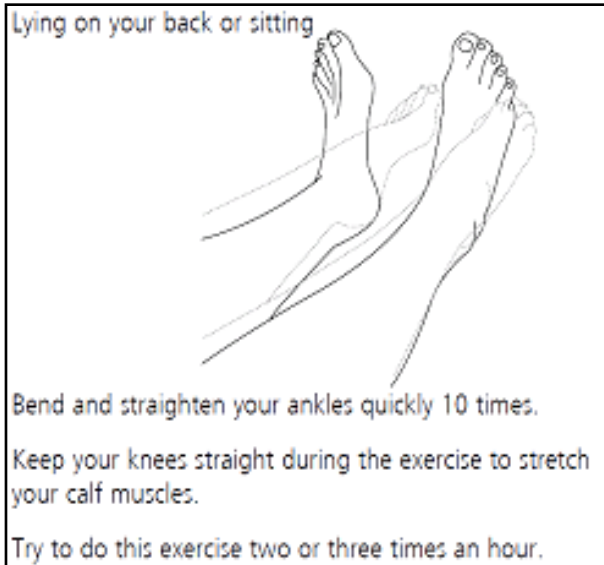


What can I do to reduce my risk while I am in the hospital or at home?

Here are some important things you can do:

- Keep moving! Walk at your own pace or do the ankle exercises shown below



- Drink plenty of water
- If you were given stockings, wear them until you have returned to normal activity
- Your doctor may ask you to take medications to prevent a DVT or PE. It is important to take the medication as told and to inform your family doctor of this new medication.

What should I do if I think I have a blood clot?

If you experience any of the symptoms listed in this information pamphlet, seek help from your family doctor or at a hospital right away.

Who can I contact for further information?

If you have any questions regarding the information in this pamphlet, please ask your **doctor, nurse, or pharmacist** while at the hospital. Your family doctor or pharmacy may answer any of your questions once you are able to go home.

This pamphlet is adapted from NHS East of England "Preventing blood clots in hospital: what you should know". Front image from Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region "Working Together to Prevent DVT/PE".



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NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM
SYSTÈME DE SANTÉ DE NIAGARA
TOGETHER IN EXCELLENCE - LEADERS IN HEALTHCARE

Preventing blood clots in hospital: what you should know

Don't let an unwanted blood clot increase your hospital stay!



This pamphlet outlines the important things you should know about preventing unwanted blood clots during and after your hospital stay.

Without any preventative measures, your risk for an unwanted blood clot are:

10-20% for medical patients

10-40% for major surgical patients

40-60% for major orthopaedic surgical patients

What is a VTE?

Venous ThromboEmbolism (VTE) describes a blood clot that can be either a PE or DVT.

What is a DVT?

Blood clots are a normal response to stop any bleeding from an injury. Sometimes blood clots can form in the wrong place. This usually happens in the deep veins of the legs, and these blood clots are called **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)**.

What is a PE?

When a piece of a blood clot breaks off, it can travel to the lungs. This is called a **Pulmonary Embolism (PE)**.

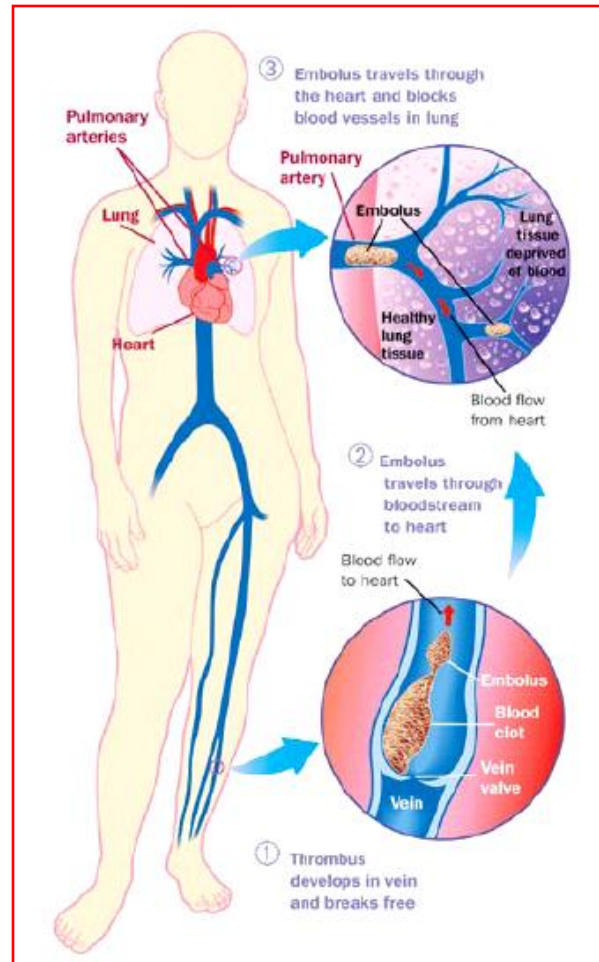
How a blood clot can be harmful

If a blood clot remains as a **DVT** and continues to grow:

- It may clog the vein
- Keep blood from getting where it needs to go.

If a blood clot becomes a **PE**:

- It can be fatal since it can prevent blood from entering the lungs.



Who is at risk for blood clots?

Anyone can develop a blood clot, but your risk increases if you:

- Are overweight
- Have family member with a history of VTE
- Are a smoker
- Are pregnant or recently had a baby
- Have cancer
- Are on certain medications like oral contraceptives or hormone replacement
- Are not very mobile
- Are having an operation

What are the signs and symptoms of a blood clot?

Possible symptoms of a VTE include:

DVT (usually occurs in one leg):

- Redness
- Warm
- One leg is larger than the other
- Pain

PE:

- Tight or heavy chest
- Coughing or coughing up blood
- Feeling out of breath

If you feel any of the above in hospital or at home, please refer to your doctor or go to the hospital.