

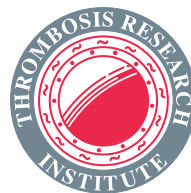


If I am admitted to hospital, what can be done to minimise my risk of DVT?

It is important that your risk of DVT is assessed when you are admitted to hospital. If your medical practitioner considers you are at risk of DVT, preventative treatment may be given in the form of blood thinning drugs and/or compression stockings.

In the weeks prior to admission, what can I do to reduce my risk of developing DVT in hospital?

- Eat a balanced diet
- Keep a healthy weight
- Keep hydrated by drinking plenty of water
- Stay mobile and keep exercising



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ARE YOU AT RISK OF DVT in Hospital? DEEP-VEIN THROMBOSIS



We often hear about the risks of DVT while on long distance trips. But DVT is much more likely to occur in patients who are admitted to hospital. This is because hospitalised patients often have several risk factors.

What is DVT?

DVT is a common medical condition that occurs when a thrombus (blood clot) forms in a deep vein, usually in the leg or pelvis, leading to either partially or completely blocked circulation.

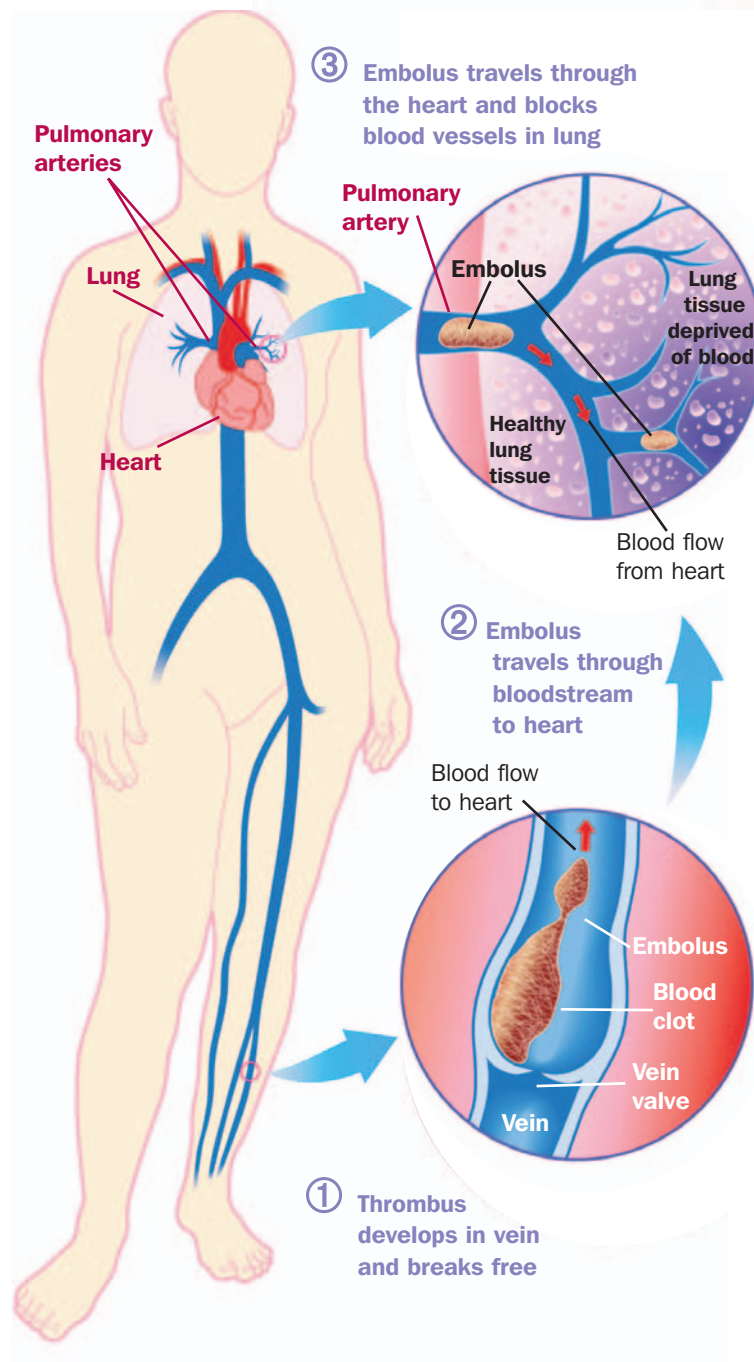
How serious is DVT?

If the blood clot in the leg breaks off and travels to the lungs, it will cause pulmonary embolism (PE). PE may result in breathing difficulties and may be fatal.

DVT may also cause life long disability with painful, swelling legs, varicose veins and ulcers.

DVT and PE are known under the collective term of venous thromboembolism (VTE).

Role of DVT/ VTE in triggering PE



How common is it among patients admitted to hospital?

- VTE is one of the commonest avoidable causes of hospital deaths
- In England alone, each year over 25,000 people die from VTE contracted in hospital
- VTE causes more than five times the estimated number of deaths each year than from hospital acquired infection
- One in three surgical patients can develop DVT if no preventative measures are given
- 70% of all deaths from VTE in hospitals occur in medical (ie non-surgical) patients

How do I find out if I am at risk of DVT in hospital?

There are several factors that may increase the chances of developing DVT in hospital – if a number of these apply to you, you may be considered to be high risk:

- Aged over 40 – the older you are the higher the risk
- Acute medical illness including heart failure, chronic respiratory diseases, major infections or cancer
- Major surgery including hip or knee replacements
- Immobility (especially relevant to hospital patients who are often confined to bed)
- Previous history of DVT or PE, or with a strong family history of either
- Obesity