



What can I do to prevent DVT developing?

- Eat a balanced diet
- Keep a healthy weight
- Keep hydrated - drink plenty of water
- Stay mobile with plenty of leg exercise
- If confined to bed with an illness do foot exercises

If my GP suspects that I am at risk, what treatment may be recommended?

If your medical practitioner considers you are at risk of DVT, preventative treatment may be given in the form of compression stockings and/or blood thinning drugs.

If you develop DVT and/or PE, treatment may be given in a type of heparin (blood thinning drug) followed by longer term therapy to prevent recurrent blood clots.



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ARE YOU AT RISK OF DVT? DEEP-VEIN THROMBOSIS



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.

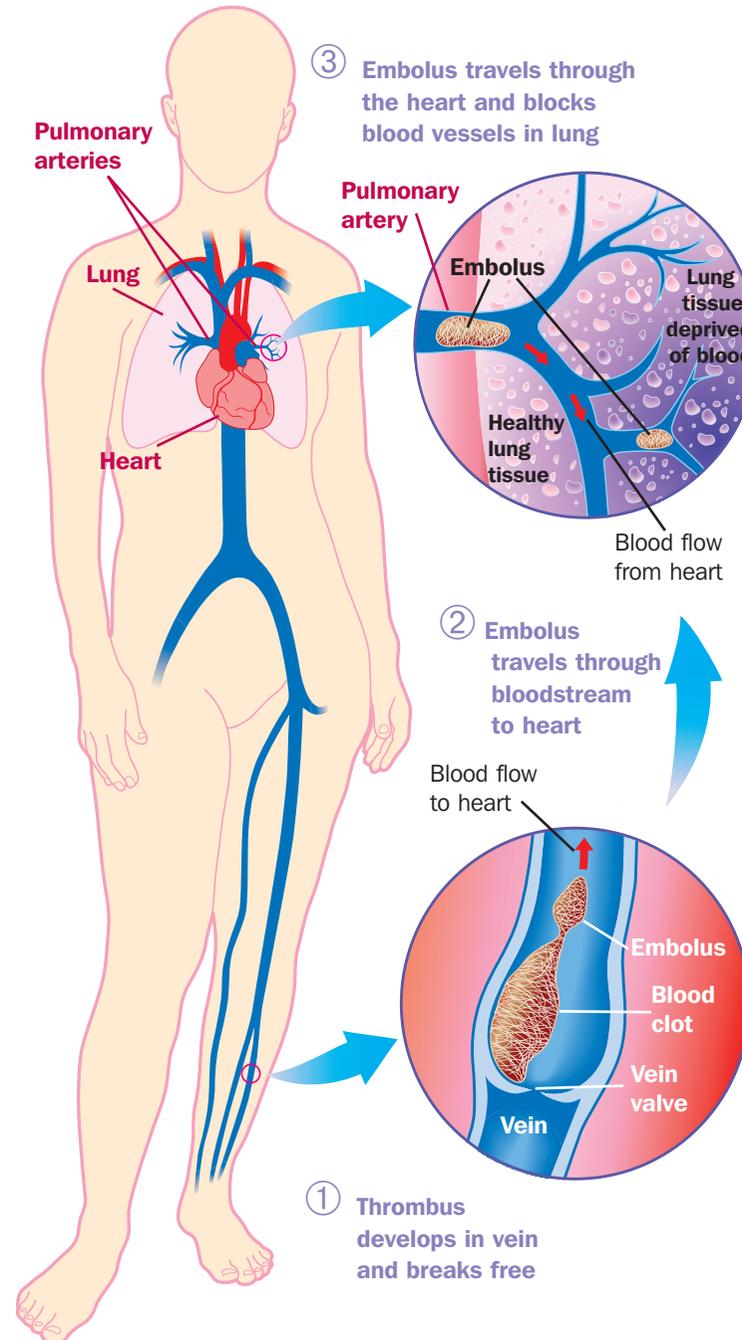
DVT may also cause life long disability with painful, swelling legs, varicose veins and ulcers.

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

How common is it?

- More people die from VTE than the combined figures of those who die from AIDS, breast cancer and in road traffic accidents
- Almost 500,000 people in the European Union are estimated to die from VTE annually, of which only 7% are diagnosed with the condition before their death
- VTE is one of the commonest avoidable causes of hospital deaths
- One in three surgical patients may develop DVT if no preventative measures are given

Role of DVT/ VTE in triggering PE



Am I at risk of DVT?

There are several factors that may increase the chances of developing DVT including:

- Age – 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 when you are unwell
- Pregnancy
- Taking the combined contraceptive pill (the Pill) or HRT
- Previous history of DVT or PE, or with a strong family history of either
- Obesity

How do I know if I have VTE (DVT and PE)?

Many people with VTE have no obvious symptoms at all. However, the most common symptoms include:

- Pain, tenderness and swelling of the leg, usually in the calf
- Mild fever, with hotness in the area of the thrombosis
- Redness of the leg
- Distended veins
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain when you breathe