

# Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

## What you need to know

People with DVT have a blood clot in a deep vein that blocks the flow of blood. Usually DVT happens in a leg, but it can happen anywhere in the body.

### Why does it happen?

DVT is common if a person's blood flow is slowed down or disturbed. This can happen after:

- Surgery or being in the hospital for a long time.
- Spending a lot of time in bed or off your feet.
- Sitting in a small space, such as a car or airplane, for a long period of time.

### How will I know if I have DVT?

Signs of DVT come on suddenly, without warning. You might feel some or all of these:

- Sudden cramp or pain in your leg that gets better if you raise your leg.
- Swelling, redness, or change of color in your leg.
- One leg feeling warmer than the other leg.

### What is the treatment for DVT?

Your care team will help you manage your DVT by giving you medicines, a prescription for a special stocking, and tips on how to keep the swelling down as you recover. You'll get blood tests regularly to make sure you're taking the right amount of medicine.

The goal of treatment for DVT is to:

- Stop the clot from getting bigger or breaking loose.
- Stop the clot from moving to another part of your body.
- Keep new clots from forming.
- Prevent injuries that can cause bleeding.
- Relieve the swelling.

## Can DVT lead to anything more serious?

### Pulmonary Embolism (PE)

In a very small number of cases (less than 2%), DVT can cause a PE. This happens if the clot in your leg breaks loose and moves to your lung.

### These are signs of PE. Call your doctor immediately if you:

- Suddenly have a hard time breathing.
- Have a chest pain that gets worse when you take a deep breath.
- Cough and bring up blood.

### Swelling

People with DVT can have swelling in their legs that doesn't go away. Your doctor will give you a prescription for a special type of stocking, called a compression stocking or TED hose, that can keep this problem from happening.