

## Know the Risks for Deep Vein Thrombosis (Ages 13 years and Up)

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a common condition. It is the result of a blood clot that forms inside a vein, usually in the leg, which can block the flow of blood through the vein.

### DVT and Pulmonary Embolism

DVT can lead to pulmonary embolism (PE). PE occurs when a blood clot breaks loose, travels through the veins, and blocks a blood vessel leading to the lungs.

### DVT Signs and Symptoms

Often, DVT occurs without signs or symptoms and can be hard to detect.

Contact your doctor if you notice	Seek urgent medical help if you have:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swelling of the leg</li> <li>• Pain or tenderness in the leg; the pain is usually in one leg and may only be present when standing or walking</li> <li>• Skin that is warm to the touch in the leg               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red or discolored skin</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Unexplained shortness of breath Chest pain and /or palpitations Anxiety and/or sweating Coughing /coughing up blood Fatigue and/or fainting

### Who is at risk for DVT?

DVT can occur in almost anyone, but certain people may be more at risk.

Some factors that may increase your risk of DVT are:

Age 40 years or older	Stroke
Being overweight	Respiratory failure
A personal or family history of blood clots	Varicose veins
Birth control pills	Pregnancy
Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)	Surgery including hip, knee, or stomach surgery
Cancer	Currently off your feet due to a long illness
Certain heart problems	

### How is DVT treated?

The good news is DVT may be prevented and treated. Your doctor may prescribe medicine or take other action. That is why it is important to talk to your doctor about your risk of DVT. It could save your life.

## **Patient Education**

### **General Measures to Prevent DVT Postoperatively**

1. Exercise legs once per hour while resting
2. Early ambulation
3. Keep TED hose on until normal activity resumes
4. Women, particularly those over 35, consider the risk and benefits of taking oral contraceptives
5. Encourage healthy diet and weight and discourage use of tobacco products
6. Wear loose comfortable clothing
7. Maintain hydration and avoid alcohol
8. Keep legs uncrossed