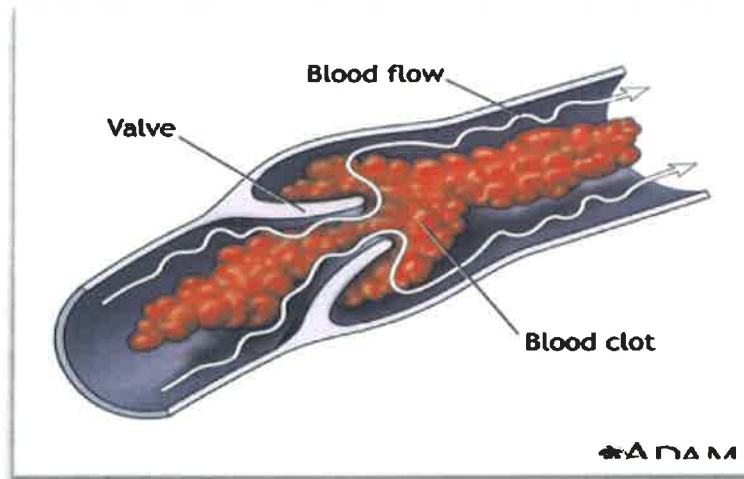


# Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism

## Important Patient Safety Information

Blood clotting is part of the natural defense mechanisms in your body. Blood clots form around injuries to stop bleeding and protect the wound from infection. However, blood clotting is not natural in veins. A blood clot that forms in the deep veins of the body is called a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). DVT occurs most commonly in the leg; although it can occur anywhere in the body, such as the veins in the arm, abdomen or pelvis, or around the brain.



The following are the most common and usually occur in the affected limb.

### Symptoms of Deep Vein Thrombosis:

- Pain or tenderness
  - Swelling
    - Discoloration (bluish, purplish or reddish skin color)
    - Warmth (warmer to touch than other areas)

If you experience any of these symptoms, call your provider at 630-584-1400.

DVT can cause a life-threatening complication called a Pulmonary Embolism (PE). This happens if the clot breaks free and travels through the veins and reaches the lungs. When this happens, it can block the flow of blood to the lungs and heart leading to a dangerous medical condition that can even lead to death. If you have any of these symptoms, it is an emergency, and you should seek emergency help immediately!

### Symptoms of Pulmonary Embolism:

- Recent or sudden shortness of breath (feeling like you can't catch your breath)
  - Chest pain or discomfort, which worsens with a deep breath or coughing
  - Coughing up blood
  - Rapid heart beat

**REMEMBER: This is a serious condition! If you have any of these, call 911 or get to the hospital immediately.**

The good news is that most DVT and PE can be prevented or treated by the use of blood thinners. Fox Valley Orthopaedics wants you to be aware of a DVT as a potential complication of orthopedic injury and treatment. The following list identifies orthopedic risk factors for the development of a DVT:

- ✓ Bed rest
- ✓ Recent surgery
- ✓ Non-weight bearing
- ✓ Immobilization of the leg in a cast or boot
- ✓ Injury or fracture of the lower extremity

Anyone can be at risk for DVT, but the more risk factors you have, the greater your chances are of developing DVT. Take a moment to review this list of common medical risk factors in the development of a DVT for yourself or family member and make sure that you discuss it with your provider. (check all that apply)

- |                                                      |                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of DVT              | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart valve disease                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of PE               | <input type="checkbox"/> Atrial fibrillation                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family History of DVT       | <input type="checkbox"/> Factor V Leiden                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Protein C or S deficiency                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer or chemotherapy      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sepsis in the last month                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obesity                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pneumonia in the last month                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COPD                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Central venous lines or ports              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Varicose veins              | <input type="checkbox"/> Inflammatory bowel disease                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hormone replacement therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and up to 6 weeks after delivery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oral contraceptives         | <input type="checkbox"/> Long airplane or land travel               |

#### *Diagnosis of a DVT*

- ❖ A DVT is generally diagnosed by a Venous Doppler ultrasound which is a test performed at the radiology department of a hospital.

#### *Diagnosis of a PE*

- ❖ A PE is generally diagnosed by Computerized tomography (CT scan) of the lung which is a test performed at the radiology department of a hospital.

#### *How to Minimize DVT Risk*

There are many ways to minimize the risk of a DVT. The most common include:

- ✓ Walking or other regular exercise
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Don't smoke
- ✓ wearing compression stockings
- ✓ wearing loose-fitting clothing
- ✓ drink plenty of water, and limit alcohol and caffeine
- ✓ aspirin therapy prescribed by your provider

However, if you are at high risk for a DVT, your treatment could include prescription blood thinners that may require blood tests to monitor the effectiveness of the therapy.

The providers at Fox Valley Orthopaedic Institute want you to know the signs and symptoms for early diagnosis of a DVT and your treatment options. Please let your providers know if you think you are at risk, call us at **630-584-1400** with any questions or concerns.