

## Preventing blood clots (Venous Thromboembolism VTE)

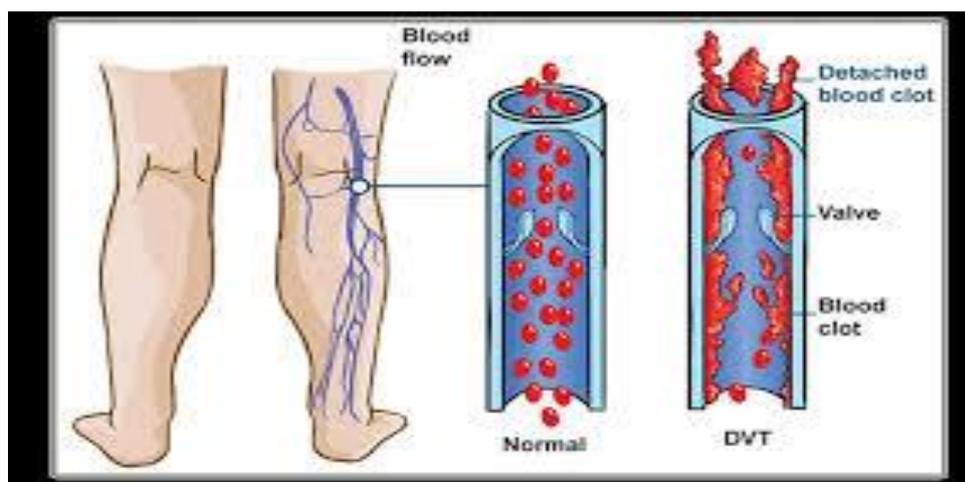
### Patient information

This leaflet provides information to patients on the prevention of developing a blood clot during a hospital admission

Venous Thromboembolism develops when blood clots form on the blood vessels. These often form in the deep veins of the leg or groin and are referred to as DVT.

If part of the clot breaks off, it can travel through the blood and lodge in the main blood vessels of the lung causing a pulmonary embolism (PE) which can be very serious.

VTE can be prevented. This leaflet explains who is at higher risk of VTE and what can be done to reduce the risk.



### Who is at risk of developing VTE

- You are undergoing major surgery
- You are aged over 60
- You have long periods of not moving or reduced mobility
- You are on certain medications such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT), oral contraception (the Pill), tamoxifen, raloxifene or chemotherapy
- You are pregnant or have given birth in within the last 6 weeks

- You have cancer or are receiving cancer treatment
- You are overweight or obese
- You have a history of VTE or there is a family history of VTE
- You are dehydrated
- You have an inherited or acquired blood clotting problem
- You have more than one medical condition such as heart disease, diabetes and respiratory illness
- You have travelled long haul (for journeys longer than four hours) within four weeks before or after hospital admission.

## Prevention

On admission to hospital an individual assessment will be carried out. Your individual risk will be assessed and you will be given appropriate preventative measures according to your level of risk of forming a blood clot and risk of bleeding.

## Treatment may include

- Anticoagulation medication (drugs that prevent clotting). This may be in a tablet form or injection
- Anti-embolism stockings. You may be fitted with stockings to reduce damage to leg veins and encourage return of blood to the heart whilst you are immobile
- Compression devices: Inflatable sleeves fitted around the foot or calf that inflate and deflate at regular intervals to encourage circulation.

## Ways in which you can help

- Eat a balanced diet
- If you are overweight, try and lose weight before you come into hospital if it is a planned admission
- Drink plenty of fluid. Dehydration is a risk factor for VTE

- Mobilising and exercises. Movement is important and aids recovery. Move around when you are feeling well enough. Doing foot exercises whilst you are inactive helps to pump blood around the body.

## Symptoms of deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

DVT is a blood clot that usually occurs in one of the deep veins of the leg or pelvis.

Symptoms include swelling of the calf or thigh, usually accompanied by pain, heat or redness, or difficulty in weight bearing. However, many DVTs produce no, or only some of these symptoms.

## Symptoms of a pulmonary embolism (PE)

PE occurs when a piece of blood clot breaks off into the bloodstream and blocks one of the blood vessels in the lungs. Symptoms include difficulty in breathing or shortness of breath, coughing up bloodstained sputum (spit) or chest pain that is often worse when breathing in.

## Discharge

You may be discharged on anticoagulation medication if it is required. Please take the medication as instructed for the duration.

## Who should I contact if I have a question?

VTE can happen at any time during a stay in hospital or in the weeks after leaving hospital. If you experience any VTE symptoms or bleeding once you are at home you should seek urgent medical advice from your GP, by contacting 111 or your nearest emergency department.

## What should I do in case of an emergency?

If an outpatient attend your nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

## Languages/ Alternative Formats

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format.  
Please contact: 01895 279973

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01895 279 973

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Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie  
audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem informacji pacjenta (patient  
information) pod numerem telefonu: 01895 279973.

如果你需要這些資料的其他語言版本、大字体、或音頻格式，請致電01895 279 973 查詢。

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يرجى  
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