

PREVENTING DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when a blood clot forms in a vein far below the skin, often in the legs. Anyone can get DVT. But certain risk factors make the problem more likely. These include recent surgery, a leg injury, and a family history of blood clots. Other risk factors include prolonged bed rest or sitting, taking certain medications, being overweight, and smoking. DVT can cause pain and lead to serious health problems. To help prevent DVT, use the steps below.

Compression

Elastic compression stockings squeeze (compress) the legs to help improve blood flow. Your **healthcare provider (HCP)** will prescribe these stockings for you.

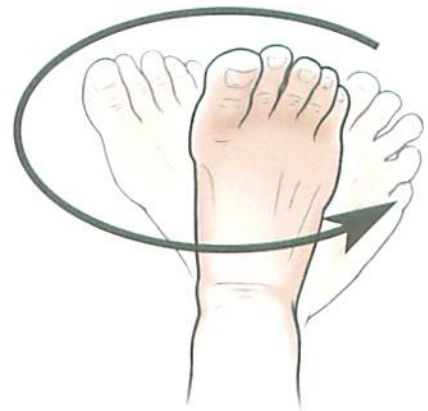
- Wear stockings as directed. Don't let stockings bunch at the top. This can restrict blood flow and increase swelling. Also, make sure the stockings have no folds or wrinkles.
- Ask your HCP about special tools you can use to help put stockings on.



Exercise

Exercise keeps blood moving and helps prevent clots.

- Do foot exercises every half-hour. This helps keep blood moving while you sit or stand. For example, circle your foot at the ankle in one direction, then the other.
- When sitting or standing for long stretches of time, change your position often. If sitting, get up and move around every hour.
- Walk often throughout the day. Ask your HCP for advice about other exercises you can do to help prevent blood clots.



Elevation

Raising (elevating) your legs above heart level helps keep blood from pooling. This makes clots less likely to form. Elevating your legs works best if you lie flat on your back. You can use a few pillows to prop your legs up.





Other Tips

- Your HCP will likely prescribe medications to help treat or prevent blood clots. Be sure to take these exactly as directed.
- If you smoke, quit. Smoking damages blood vessels and makes blood clots more likely. Ask your HCP about medications or products that may help you quit smoking. Also, consider joining a support group or stop-smoking program.
- Maintain a healthy weight. If you need to lose weight, talk with your HCP. He or she can help you form a weight-loss plan you can follow.
- Avoid tight clothing. Don't wear clothes or shoes that pinch or leave red marks.
- Keep your skin clean and dry. Also, check the skin on your legs daily for any changes.

When to Call Your HCP



Call your healthcare provider if you have any of these:

- Pain, swelling, aching, or tenderness in a leg
- Skin changes such as redness, warmth, bruising, or sores on a leg

When to Call 911



Call 911 right away if you any of these symptoms:

- Rapid breathing or shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Coughing, which may bring up blood
- Rapid heartbeat
- Lightheadedness or fainting
- Feeling of dread (anxiety)

Special Instructions:

This product is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Only your doctor can diagnose and treat a medical problem.

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