

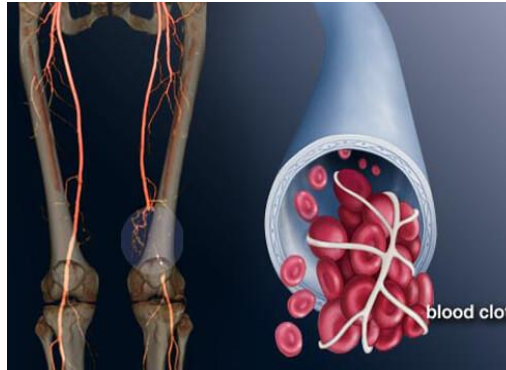
## How can it be prevented?

You can take steps to prevent deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE). If you're at risk for these conditions:

- See your doctor for regular checkups.
- Take all medicines as your doctor prescribes.
- Get out of bed and move around as soon as possible after surgery or illness (as your doctor recommends). Moving around lowers your chance of developing a blood clot.
- Exercise your lower leg muscles during long trips. Walking helps prevent blood clots from forming.

If you've had DVT or PE before, you can help prevent future blood clots. Follow the steps above and:

- Take all medicines that your doctor prescribes to prevent or treat blood clots
- Follow up with your doctor for tests and treatment
- Use compression stockings as your doctor directs to prevent leg swelling



## References:

Deep Vein Thrombosis: MedlinePlus. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18, 2016, from <https://medlineplus.gov/deepveinthrombosis.html>

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**50%**

ABOUT HALF OF THE PEOPLE WITH DVT  
BLOOD CLOTS HAVE NO SYMPTOMS?

**DEEP  
VEIN  
THROMBOSIS  
(DVT)**

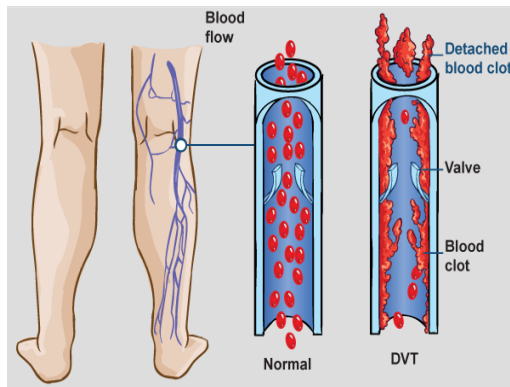
Trinity Surgery Center

## What is deep vein thrombosis (DVT)?

A blood clot that forms in a vein deep in the body. Most deep vein clots occur in the lower leg or thigh. If the vein swells, the condition is called thrombophlebitis.

A deep vein thrombosis can break loose and cause a serious problem in the lung, called a pulmonary embolism (PE).

Both DVT and PE can cause serious, possibly life-threatening problems if not treated.



## Who is at risk?

The risk factors for deep vein thrombosis (DVT) include:

- A history of DVT.
- Conditions or factors that make your blood thicker or more likely to clot than normal. Some inherited blood disorders (such as factor V Leiden), hormone therapy, or birth control pills.
- Injury to a deep vein from surgery, a broken bone, or other trauma.
- Slow blood flow in a deep vein due to lack of movement. This may occur after surgery, if you're ill and in bed for a long time, or if you're traveling for a long time.
- Pregnancy and the first 6 weeks after giving birth.
- Recent or ongoing treatment for cancer.
- A central venous catheter.
- Older age. Being older than 60 is a risk factor for DVT, although DVT can occur at any age.
- Overweight or obesity.
- Smoking.

Your risk for DVT increases if you have more than one of the risk factors listed above.



Swelling

Skin Changes

## What are the symptoms?

Only about half of the people who have DVT have signs and symptoms.

- Swelling of the leg or along a vein in the leg.
- Pain or tenderness in the leg, which you may feel only when standing or walking.
- Increased warmth in the area of the leg that's swollen or painful.
- Red or discolored skin on the leg.

Some people aren't aware of a deep vein clot until they have signs and symptoms of PE. Signs and symptoms of PE include:

- Unexplained shortness of breath
- Pain with deep breathing
- Coughing up blood
- Rapid breathing
- Fast heart rate

## What are the treatment and therapies?

- **Anticoagulants (Warfarin and heparin)** are most common and are also called blood thinners.
- **Thrombin inhibitors** treat blood clots in patient's who can't take heparin.
- **Thrombolytics** quickly dissolves large blood clots. Only used in life-threatening situations due to causing of sudden bleeding.
- **Vena cava filter** that catches blood clots in the vena cava before they travel to the lungs.
- **Graduated compression stockings** reduce leg swelling caused by blood clots.

## How can you get DVT?

Sitting still for a long time can make you more likely to get a DVT. Some medicines and disorders that increase your risk for blood clots can also lead to DVTs.