

Reducing the risk of blood clots while you are in hospital

Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet tells you about the risks of blood clots. It tells you what you do to help avoid them while you are in hospital. You will still be at risk of blood clots for several weeks after you go home. When you leave hospital, please read our other leaflet about how to reduce your risk at home. Search for leaflet 339 or title: 'Reducing the risk of blood clots when you go home'.

How do blood clots happen and what problems can they cause?

Blood needs to clot to stop an injury from bleeding. This is a complex process. Sometimes it can go wrong. A clot will form in the wrong place, often in the deep veins of the legs. This is called a 'deep vein thrombosis (DVT)'.

Sometimes a piece of the clot can break off and travel to the lungs. This is known as a 'pulmonary embolism' (PE).

DVT and PE are types of **venous thromboembolisms (VTE)**. In extreme cases VTEs cause death. Anyone can get VTE at any age. Some people are more at risk than others, for example if you have had surgery or a serious medical condition, have not been moving around as much as usual, are pregnant, overweight or have certain health conditions.

If you have any questions about blood clots while you are in hospital, please speak to the nurse on your ward.

Am I at risk of a blood clot (VTE)?

We will assess you when you come into hospital. We will look at your current health problems, past medical history, age and any family history of blood clots. If you are at increased risk of blood clots, we will compare this to the risk of giving you blood thinning medication. We will then suggest the right preventative treatment for you. We will do these assessments again if your condition changes.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

What are the treatment options to reduce risk?

We may recommend one or both of these:

- Anti-embolism/ compression stockings
- Injections or other medication to thin your blood

Most people will need these throughout their stay. You should talk to your nurse about possible complications, and how long you should continue with them.

Anti-embolism stockings (also known as TEDs® or compression socks):

These squeeze your legs and keep the blood moving. We will measure your legs to make sure that they fit well. You must wear these throughout the **day and night**. You can take them off once a day to clean your legs. A nurse will show you how to put these on and check the condition of your skin. We will give you clean stockings when needed.

Injectable medication (heparin):

This thins the blood helping it to flow rather than clot. Heparin is an animal based medication. If this goes against your personal beliefs, please speak to a member of staff. They will contact your ward pharmacist to see if a non-animal based product is available/ suitable.

If other blood thinning medication may be a better option, we will talk to you about this.

What can I do myself to reduce the risk?

- Drink plenty of water (unless told not to for medical reasons). This will help to keep your blood flowing freely.
- Keep your legs moving. This helps to stop your blood from slowing down. It reduces the chance of clotting.
- Walk around. If you are not able to walk, keep your legs moving. If this is difficult, exercise your ankles. The more you do this the better.

We will check your risk again before you leave hospital. Speak to your ward nurse if you have any questions about blood clots. For more information on DVT and PE visit

www.nhs.uk/conditions/deep-vein-thrombosis-dvt/prevention/

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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