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# DVT: Deep Vein Thrombosis

**Deep vein thrombosis** (which is also known as DVT) is the formation of a blood clot in a deep vein which can cause a pulmonary embolus (which is also known as PE). DVT and PE may not present any obvious symptoms, and many people who demonstrate classic symptoms do not actually have the condition. DVT usually occurs in people over age 40 and obese, or those who have already had a DVT.

*Other DVT risk factors include*:

- Prolonged bed rest
- Major injury or paralysis
- History of heart attack, stroke, or respiratory failure
- Surgery involving the leg joints or pelvis
- Within six weeks of pregnancy and childbirth
- Contraceptives containing estrogen
- Hormone-replacement therapy
- Circulation problems
- Cancer or cancer treatments
- Family history of DVT/PE
- Autoimmune disorder
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Central venous catheterization
- Varicose Veins

**Measures you can take to prevent DVT**:

- Wear compression stockings. These keep blood from pooling in veins.
- Elevate your feet.
- Get up and move as soon as you can after surgery.
- Take pain medicine as prescribed to make it easier to move around.
- Do any leg exercises that may be prescribed.
- Move ankle and toes multiple times a day
- Take off cast or splint to move toes and ankle

**Pulmonary embolism** symptoms may include:

- Unexplained shortness of breath
- Pain, swelling or tenderness in the calf muscles that is worse while standing or walking
- Chest pain or palpitations
- Rapid pulse
- Leg fatigue, anxiety and/or sweating
- Very low blood pressure
- Fainting
- Coughing up blood

Anyone with symptoms of PE should seek emergency medical treatment, as this condition is potentially fatal within a matter of hours. Please notify our office immediately if you have any questions or concerns.