

What is it?

A pulmonary embolism is when a blood clot blocks the arteries that supply blood to the lungs. A blood clot can form in the veins of the legs, pelvis, abdomen (tummy) or the heart. The clot moves from where it first forms and travels through the bloodstream. It then lodges in the arteries supplying blood to the lungs. A pulmonary embolism is a serious and potentially life-threatening condition.

What will my GP do now?

Your GP will most likely refer you immediately to the Emergency Department. The hospital can give medications straight into a vein (intravenously, IV) so they can have an immediate effect. The doctors at the hospital may also do further tests and discuss treatments including blood thinners or surgical procedures. You might be offered a Hospital in the Home service (see 'What supports are available?').

When should I call an ambulance?

Phone Triple 0 (000) immediately if you become short of breath, have pain in your chest, have a rapid pulse, feel dizzy or faint, or begin to cough up blood.

What will my GP do in the future?

After your visit to the hospital, you will need to see your GP regularly. The GP will help you:

- Understand the treatment you received in hospital
- Understand how to use any new medications you are prescribed, and how long to take them
- Help you learn how to reduce the risk of future blood clot
- Talk to you about regular exercise, changes to your diet, weight loss and quitting smoking

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- What medicine(s) do I need to take?
- Are there any side effects?
- What symptoms should I look out for?



What can I do?

Take any medications your doctors prescribe, until they tell you to stop. Follow any recommendations your GP makes for your lifestyle, such as a change to your diet and exercise.

What supports are available?

Hospital In The Home (HITH)

Hospital in the Home (also known as 'HITH' or 'Hospital at Home')

lets patients with certain common medical conditions have hospital-level care at home.

Hospital in the Home services can be delivered wherever you live: in your own home, in an assisted living facility or in a residential care facility. Your GP can refer you.

Where can I learn more?

- **Healthdirect** – pulmonary embolism: [healthdirect.gov.au](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au)
- **Patient.info** – pulmonary embolism: [patient.info](https://www.patient.info)