

Deep vein thrombosis

What is it?

Deep vein thrombosis is a type of blood clot that forms in a deep vein (not a vein on the surface of the skin). Deep vein thrombosis is usually seen in the leg but may form in any deep vein. The main danger is that the clot may move and lodge in the lung. This is called a **pulmonary embolism** and is a serious and potentially life-threatening complication.

What will my GP do now?

Your GP will determine if you can safely be managed in primary care or whether you need to go to the Emergency Department. If you can be safely managed as an outpatient, they will develop a treatment plan for you that may include blood thinning medication and wearing compression stockings.

If you need to go to the Emergency Department, they may give you medications straight into a vein (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 surgery. You might be offered a hospital in home service.

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- ☐ *What treatment will I need?*
- ☐ *How much exercise should I do daily?*
- ☐ *How can I quit smoking?*



What will my GP do in the future?

Depending on the size and location of the clot, your GP may want to see you regularly for check-ups for up to three months. Your GP may also do more blood tests to find out what caused the clot. They may recommend having an ultrasound to see the clot. If needed, your GP will refer you to a specialist. Once you finish your treatment, your GP will talk to you about preventing clots in the future.

What can I do?

It is important to take any medications your doctors prescribe. Think about quitting smoking if you are a smoker as it may increase your risk of getting clots. Follow your GP's advice about diet and lifestyle. If you have any concerns, see your GP.

What supports are available?

Hospital in the Home (HITH) lets patients have hospital-level care in the home. It reduces the length of stay or avoids a hospital stay altogether.

Where can I learn more?

Better Health Channel - Deep vein thrombosis: betterhealth.vic.gov.au

MyDr - Deep vein thrombosis and flying: mydr.com.au

When should I call an ambulance?



Phone Triple 000 immediately if you have shortness of breath, pain in the chest, have a rapid pulse, feel faint or dizzy, or cough up blood.