

Women and Blood Clots

Dangerous blood clots often form in the deep veins of a person's arm or leg. This type of blood clot is called a deep vein thrombosis or DVT. If a DVT is left untreated, it can break off or travel to the lungs. A blood clot that travels to the lungs is called a pulmonary embolism or PE and can be life threatening

DVT

- ◆ Tenderness in the leg
- ◆ Redness
- ◆ Swelling and the feeling of tightness
- ◆ Pain in the leg (usually in the calf)
- ◆ Warmth and redness (particularly in the back of the leg)

PE

- ◆ Chest pain (particularly when breathing deeply)
- ◆ Unexplained shortness of breath
- ◆ Light headedness or feeling faint
- ◆ Coughing up blood

If you experience any of these symptoms, seek immediate medical attention

Your Risk is Increased if:



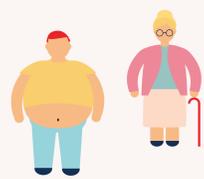
Recent Hospital stay, surgery, immobility



Long flight over 6 hours



Pregnancy or up to 6 weeks after birth



Age over 60 or overweight



HRT or oral contraceptive



Active cancer or receiving treatment

Ask your doctor for your risk to be assessed

A woman's risk of blood clots is further increased if she previously experienced a blood clot, has a family history or has been diagnosed with a genetic or acquired clotting disorder.

Pregnancy and Childbirth

Pregnancy is a major risk factor for the development of dangerous blood clots. Women who are pregnant or who have just given birth are at increased risk for 6 weeks after birth. Pregnancy does not directly cause blood clots but it does pose a four-fold increased risk for the development of a blood clot. The risk increases to about 20-fold in the weeks immediately following childbirth, and is at its highest-risk of 100-fold – in the first week after the baby is born.

Birth Control and Family Planning

Birth control that contains estrogen (e.g. the pill, patch or ring) can increase the risk that a woman might experience blood clots.



The type of birth control, dose and the woman's risk factors for blood clots should be considered when choosing a safe and effective plan for each woman.

Treatment of Menopause Symptoms

Some types of HRT can increase the risk that a woman might experience blood clots by a small amount. HRT patches or creams do not increase the risk. The type of HRT, dose and the woman's risk factors for blood clots should be considered when choosing a safe and effective plan for each woman.

For more information go to
www.thrombosis.ie