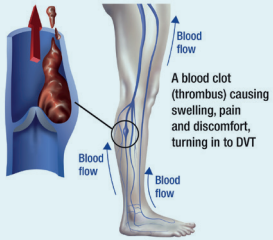
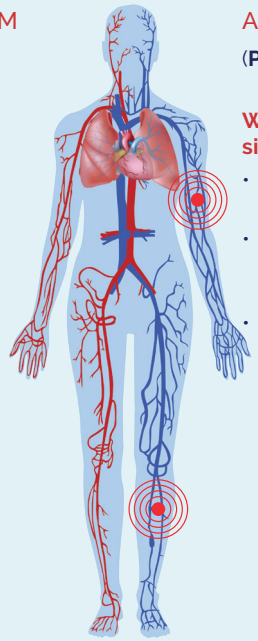
BLOOD CLOT IN THE LEG OR ARM

(**DVT** - Deep Vein Thrombosis)

What are the main signs and symptoms?*

- Swelling of one leg or arm (usually the full leg in pregnancy)
- Pain in one leg or arm, which may be worse when standing, walking or using your arm
- Warmth or redness in one leg or arm



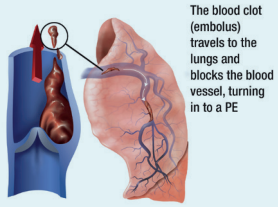


A BLOOD CLOT IN THE LUNGS

(**PE** - Pulmonary Embolism)

What are the main signs and symptoms?*

- Sudden unexplained breathlessness or rapid breathing
- Sudden, sharp chest pain (particularly when breathing deeply)
- Coughing or coughing up blood



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MYSELF?

- Ask for your risk of blood clots to be assessed, especially if you are in one of the higher risk groups listed opposite
- Walk and move as much as possible
- Drink plenty of fluids
- If directed to use stockings or medication to prevent or treat a clot follow instructions exactly
- Remember, a blood clot in the veins is more likely up to 90 days after being in hospital
- If you have any signs or symptoms of a clot, take **immediate action** to seek medical help

YOU MAY BE AT HIGHER RISK IF YOU:

- are admitted to hospital and for 90 days after you go home
- have active cancer or receiving cancer treatment
- are pregnant or have had a baby less than 6 weeks ago
- become immobile (more than 3 days in bed/travel non-stop more than 6 hours / in a leg cast)

RISK MAY INCREASE FURTHER IF:

- you or a close relative had a blood clot
- you had surgery in the last 90 days
- you have a thrombophilia (increased tendency to clot)
- you are on oestrogen-containing contraception or an oral oestrogen-containing HRT
- Covid-19 may increase your risk for several months after infection
- you have heart, lung or inflammatory disease
- you are over 60 years of age or are overweight
- you have varicose veins that become red and sore

Speak to your doctor or nurse if you are concerned – you may be at risk

*You may not have all or any of these symptoms

For further information:
www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/vte/resources/

BLOOD CLOTS

Am I at risk?

WHAT IS DVT?

Deep Vein Thrombosis is a condition that occurs when blood clots form in deep veins, usually in the leg or arm. This can often cause symptoms such as redness and swelling of the leg or arm.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE A DVT?

Sometimes there are no symptoms and a DVT is only diagnosed if a complication occurs. Symptoms may include:

Swelling of one leg or arm (usually the full leg in pregnancy)

Pain in one leg or arm, which may be worse when standing, walking or using your arm

Warmth or redness in one leg or arm

If you think you are experiencing the symptoms of a DVT, it is very important that you call your doctor immediately or present to the nearest Emergency Department.

HOW IS A DVT DIAGNOSED?

You may have any of the following tests to diagnose a DVT:

- D-dimer blood test (blood test used to rule out blood clots in combination with a risk score)
- Ultrasound

NOTE: This leaflet is for general information only. It does not replace clinical advice

WHAT IS A PE?

Pulmonary embolism, or PE, is a sudden blockage in a lung artery. The blockage usually is caused by a blood clot that travels to the lung from a vein in the leg, also known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT).

A clot that forms in one part of the body and travels in the bloodstream to another part of the body is called an embolus.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE A PE?

Sometimes there are no symptoms, but many people may feel some or all of these symptoms. They include:

Sudden unexplained breathlessness or rapid breathing

Chest pain (particularly if sharp and may be worse when breathing deeply)

Coughing or coughing up blood

If you think you are experiencing the symptoms of a PE, it is very important that you immediately, dial 999 or 112 or present to the nearest Emergency Department

HOW IS A PE DIAGNOSED?

You may have any of the following tests to diagnose a PE:

- Chest x-ray
- Lung scan (VQ scan)
- CT or spiral CT scan
- Pulmonary angiogram
- D-dimer blood test (blood test used to rule out blood clots in combination with a risk score)