WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Speak to your Doctor or Nurse immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms.

Symptoms of a Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT):

- Persistent swelling in one foot, leg or arm (skin may feel stretched).
- Persistent pain, cramping or tenderness in your foot, leg, arm or neck.
- Persistent warm or heavy sensation or pressure in your foot, leg, arm or neck.

Symptoms of a Pulmonary Embolism (PE):

- Unexplained shortness of breath.
- Chest pain (especially when breathing deeply).
- Irregular/fast heartbeat.
- Light headedness/Dizziness.
- Coughing up blood.

Contact emergency services immediately if you experience symptoms of a Pulmonary Embolism.

Some people may mistake blood clot symptoms for normal side effects of cancer treatment. However, if you are in any doubt at all, seek medical advice straight away.

YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM CONTACT:

Name: .....

Number: .....

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

PREVENTION

Minor lifestyle changes can make a difference.

- Ask for your risk of blood clots to be assessed.
- If you are prescribed anticoagulation medication, take it exactly as prescribed.
- Keep moving, walk and move as much as possible.
- Quit smoking.
- Stay hydrated.
- If directed to use compression stockings to prevent or treat a clot, please ensure they fit correctly.

If you have any signs or symptoms of a clot, take immediate action to seek medical help.

TREATING CLOTS

Treatment of Blood Clots is effective and relatively simple.

DVT (Deep Vein Thrombosis) and PE (Pulmonary Embolism) are most often treated with anticoagulants. Anticoagulants can treat blood clots, and help to prevent new blood clots forming.

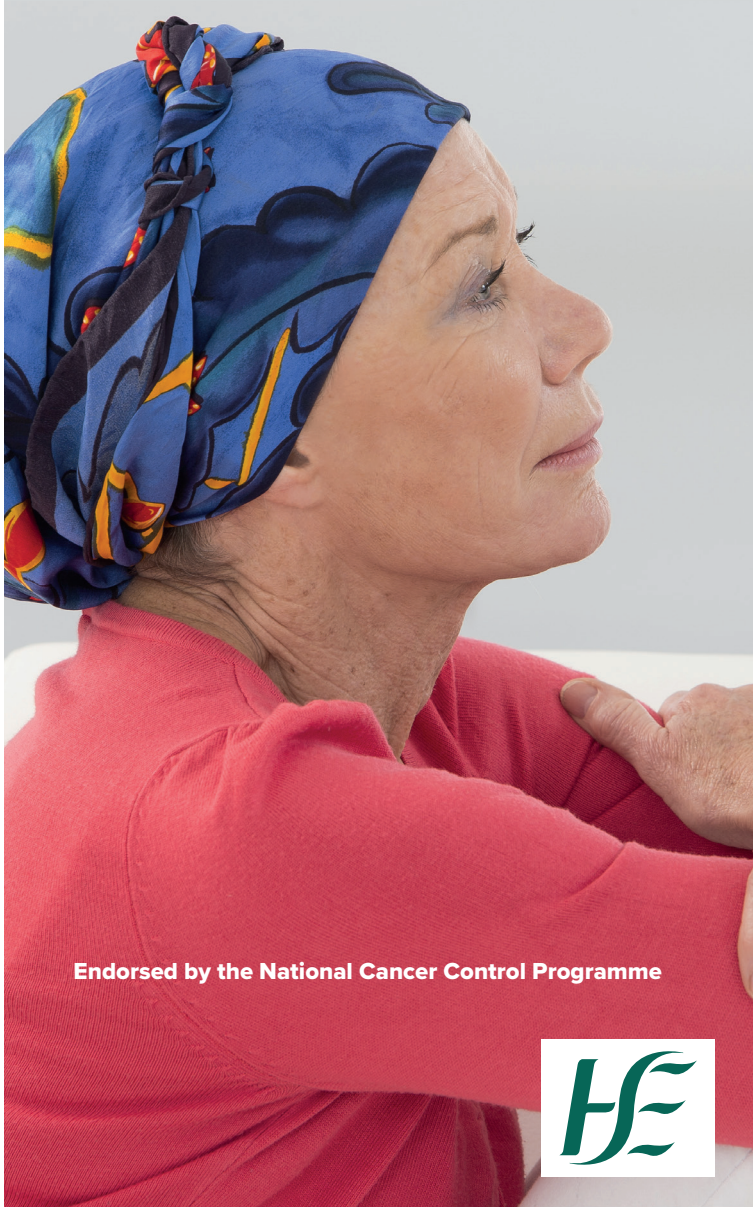
The type of anticoagulant and the treatment duration can vary depending on your cancer. You should continue to take your anticoagulaton medication unless your Doctor or Nurse specifies otherwise.

One of the main side-effects of anticoagulation therapy is a risk of bleeding. In most cases, this should not stop you from receiving treatment.

Patient Information

CANCER & CLOTS
THE RISK IS REAL

CAT - CANCER ASSOCIATED THROMBOSIS



Endorsed by the National Cancer Control Programme

3 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR:

1. What is my risk for blood clots?
2. What symptoms should I look out for?
3. What do I do, if I suspect I have a blood clot?

Cancer is a disease with many aspects to be considered. These relate to treatment, the disease itself and the implications on your daily lifestyle. One of the most important aspects is the possibility of developing a blood clot. This condition is known as Cancer-Associated Thrombosis (CAT).

1 IN 5 CANCER PATIENTS MAY DEVELOP A BLOOD CLOT

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CLOTS

1. Cancer can increase the risk of potentially fatal blood clots.
2. Surgery, PICC Lines and some Cancer treatment medications can increase the risk of a blood clot
3. In some cases, blood clots are preventable. **Ask for a blood clot risk assessment**.
4. In most cases, blood clots respond very well to treatment

WHAT IS A BLOOD CLOT?

Clots form when blood cells stick together,blocking blood vessels. Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a clot that forms within a deep vein, usually in the leg or arm. If untreated, part of the clot can break off and travel to the lungs, blocking blood flow.
This is called pulmonary embolism (PE) and can be potentially fatal if not detected and treated early.

CANCER & CLOTS

You may be at further risk if:

- You are admitted to **hospital** and for 90 days after you go home.
- You are **pregnant** or have had a baby less than 6 weeks ago.
- You are **immobile**:
  1. Being confined to bed for 3 days or more.
  2. Travelling a long distance for more than 6 hours.
  3. Immobility due to a limb being in a cast or boot.
- You have a **close relative** who had a blood clot.
- You have had **surgery** in the last 90 days.
- You have a diagnosis of **thrombophilia** (tendency to clot).
- You are taking/using **oestrogen-containing contraceptives** (including the vaginal ring) or taking oral **oestrogen containing HRT.** Discuss all options with your doctor.
- You have **heart** or **lung disease** or **Inflammation**.
- You are **over 60** years of age or **living with overweight and obesity**.
- You have **varicose veins** that become red and sore.

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

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

While all people with cancer are at some risk of developing blood clots, certain people are at higher risk than others. Your risk will depend on:

Type of Cancer

Certain types of cancer have a higher risk of clots, including cancers of the stomach, pancreas, brain, kidney, ovaries & blood.

Stage of Cancer

Cancer that is at an advanced stage can increase the risk of a clot, even in people with cancers that are otherwise considered low risk.

Cancer Treatments

Even though chemotherapy, medications, radiation and other procedures such as surgery are vital to living with cancer, some of these treatments can also cause blood clots.

Going into Hospital / Being Immobile

Being confined to bed for extended periods of time or otherwise inactive can lead to clots in people with all types of cancer.

Personal or Family History of Clots

If you have previously had a clot you are more likely to develop a blood clot than a person who has never had a clot.

Thrombosis is sometimes considered a chronic disease in cancer patients because the risk of experiencing another clot continues for many years.