

If you have any questions, please write them below. Ask your nurse or doctor before you are discharged.

*Your questions...*


#### Where can I find more information?

Please ask your doctor or nurse for more information.

Alternatively, the NHS website provides patient information on VTE:

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Thrombosis UK (previously Lifeblood) charity:

[www.thrombosis-charity.org.uk](http://www.thrombosis-charity.org.uk)

**If you have a medical query please contact 111, your GP or visit Accident and Emergency**

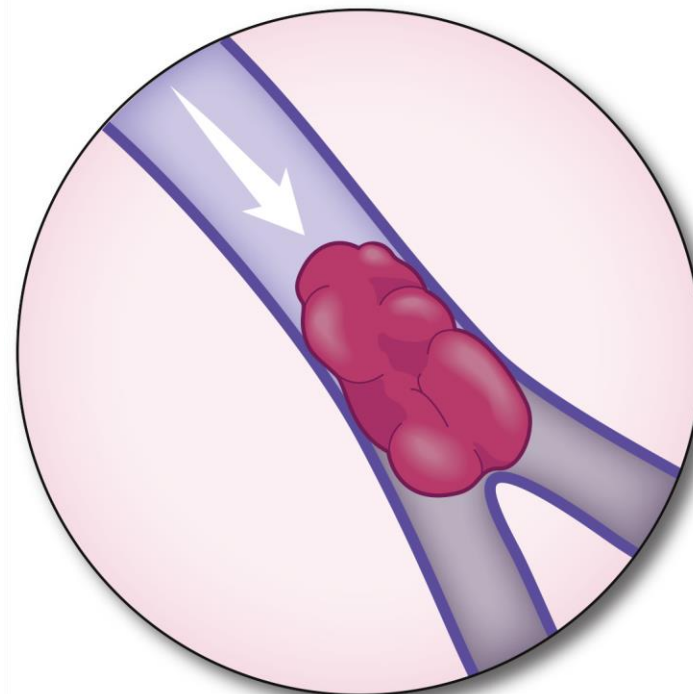
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Ratified / Review date	Sept 2023 / Sept 2026
ID number	29/2159/V4



**West Hertfordshire  
Hospitals**  
NHS Trust

# Preventing blood clots in a hospital setting

*Patient information*

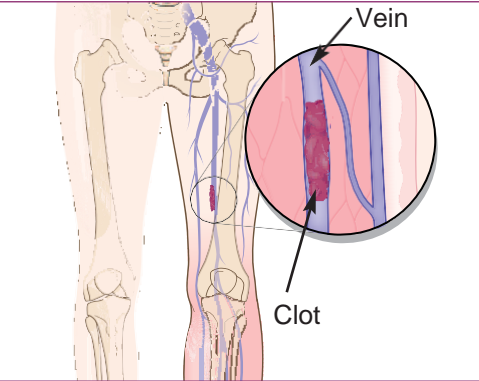
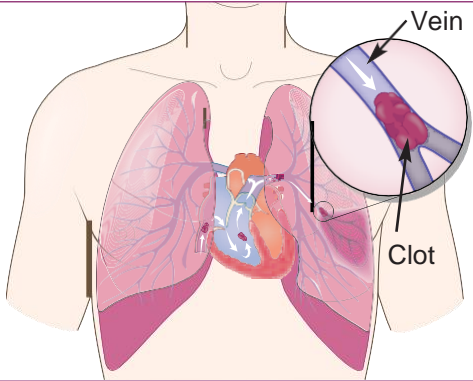


**Haematology**

Watford, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead hospitals

## What you should know

When patients are in hospital they can get blood clots. These are most commonly in:

	
<b>Legs</b> Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT). Common symptoms include pain in legs, swelling and redness. <b><i>These clots can break off and travel to the lungs.</i></b>	<b>Lungs</b> Pulmonary Embolism (PE). Common symptoms include coughing, chest pain, shortness of breath and blood in phlegm.

**Note:** If you get any of these symptoms either in hospital or after you go home, please seek medical advice immediately.

Any unwell adult in hospital is at risk of developing a blood clot. Other factors that put people at greater risk include:

- A previous clot
- A recent diagnosis of cancer
- Certain 'sticky blood' conditions
- Dehydration
- Being overweight
- Being immobile
- Contraceptive or hormone tablets
- Having an operation
- Significant injury or trauma
- Being pregnant or having given birth or had a miscarriage or termination of pregnancy in the past six weeks.

### What is being done to reduce the risk of blood clots when in hospital?

Doctors will assess your risk and advise you on the following if they feel it is required:

**Anti-embolism stockings:** you should be shown how to wear them. If you have any pain or discomfort, please speak to your nurse. Slippers should be worn over stocking when walking.

**Inflatable sleeves:** to be worn around your legs or feet whilst in a bed or chair to increase blood flow.

**Blood thinners:** you may receive this by injection. The injection normally prescribed within our hospital is Enoxaparin which is a heparin. Heparin is of animal origin, so if you have any concerns about using animal products, please tell your doctor and they will discuss other options with you.

### What can I do to help myself?

#### If possible, before coming into hospital

- Talk to your doctor about contraceptive and hormone replacement therapy. Your doctor may consider stopping them in the weeks before an operation and will provide advice on temporary use of other methods if your usual contraceptive is stopped.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Do regular exercise.

### When in hospital

- Keep moving or walking and get out of bed as soon you can after an operation, ask your nurse or physiotherapist for more information.
- Ask your doctor or nurse 'What is being done to reduce my risk of developing a clot?'
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep hydrated.

### What happens when I go home?

- If you were provided with anti-embolism stockings during your hospital stay, then you may need to wear them when you go home, until you return to your usual level of activity. Your nurse will tell you how to put them on and how to check your skin.
- If you need to continue blood thinning injections at home your nursing team will teach you how to do this or refer you to the district nurses.
- If you get any of these symptoms (see page 1) either in hospital or after you go home, please seek medical advice immediately.

Continue to stay well hydrated and, if possible and safe, exercise and become more mobile.

If you have any questions, please write them below. Ask your nurse or doctor before you are discharged.