



Preventing blood clots in a vein

Venous thromboembolism (VTE)

TO BETTER GUIDE YOU

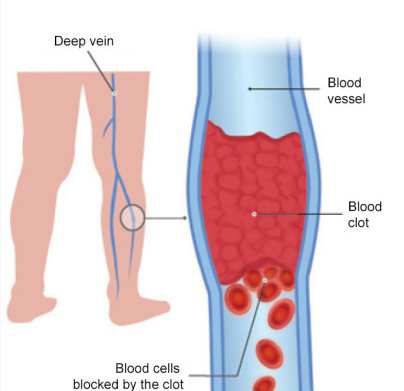
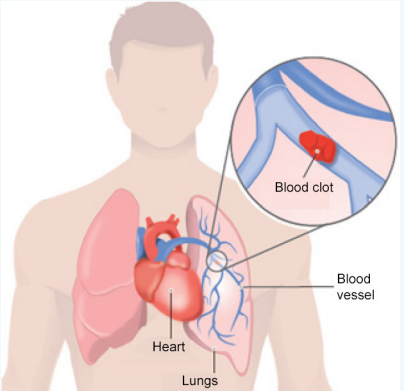
**Did you know
you may be at risk
of developing venous
thromboembolism
(VTE)?**

**Your risk increases
if you are immobile
or sedentary, whether
in hospital, at home,
or at your residence.**

What is venous thromboembolism?

VTE happens when a blood clot forms in a vein, blocking blood flow.

There are two types of blood clots:

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)	Pulmonary embolism
A clot forms and blocks a vein in the arm or leg.	A clot travels to the lungs, where it blocks blood flow.
	

You are at higher risk if you:

- Have recently had surgery
- Are over the age of 40
- Have had a blood clot in the past
- Have cancer
- Take birth control pills
- Are overweight
- Are pregnant
- Smoke

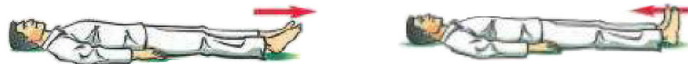
Advice for preventing blood clots:

1. Drink plenty of water

Water helps keep your blood flowing properly. If you are on fluid restrictions, speak to your doctor.

2. Move regularly

- **Start walking** as soon as possible. The care team can help you get up and move around.
- **Do foot exercises** (even while in bed):
 - **Point and flex your toes** to stretch your calves.



- **Elevate** your feet with a pillow (do not place the pillow under your knees).



- **Bend** your legs.



- **Move** your legs up and down.



- **Avoid sitting for too long.**
- **Do not cross your legs.**

3. Wear compression socks

They improve blood flow in your feet (your doctor can prescribe them for you).

4. Take your medications

Blood thinners (pills or injections) help with blood flow (your doctor can prescribe them for you).

When should I worry?



Possible signs of a blood clot in the leg (deep vein thrombosis):

- Unusual leg pain that gets worse when you walk
- Leg hot to the touch
- Swelling in the calf or leg
- Discolouration of the leg
- Limping



Possible signs of a blood clot in the lungs (pulmonary embolism):

- Sudden, unexplained shortness of breath
- Chest pain that gets worse when you inhale
- Sudden cough, with or without blood

If you are taking blood thinners (anticoagulants):

- Watch for signs of bleeding
- Avoid contact sports or activities that may lead to falls
- See a doctor if you experience bleeding that won't stop



Questions or concerns?

Call **811** for Info-Santé

In an emergency

Call **911** or **go to the hospital**

The content of this document was inspired by the CISSS de Chaudière-Appalaches pamphlet Prévention de la thromboembolie veineuse (Preventing venous thromboembolism).