

## Preventing Blood Clots (DVT or PE)

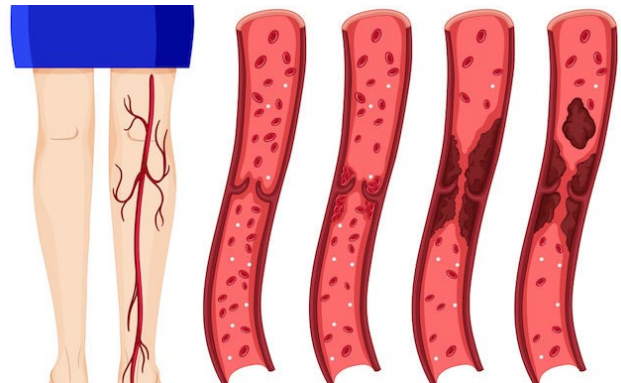
Blood clots are called thromboembolisms. There are two main types of blood clots:

- Deep vein thrombosis or DVT which is a blood clot in a vein deep in your body such as the calf of your leg.
- Pulmonary embolism or PE is a blood clot that has broken off in a vein and traveled to lungs. This is very serious and can be life threatening.

Blood clots can block the blood vessel, which can decrease blood flow the area where the clot is located.

Risk factors for blood clots include:

- Bed rest for long periods of time
- Sitting for long periods of time
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Major surgery
- Increased age
- Previous history of blood clots



Preventing blood clots after surgery is very important. To prevent blood clots:

- Stop smoking or reduce the amount you smoke before **AND** after surgery.
- If you are overweight, losing even a few pounds can take extra pressure off the veins in your legs.
- Perform ankle pump exercises, before **AND** after surgery.
- After surgery, get up and walk often. Avoid crossing your legs.

- Use the mobile compression sleeves when sitting or lying for the first two (2) weeks after surgery. These sleeves enhance blood flow to the deep veins in the leg and can decrease the risk of clots.



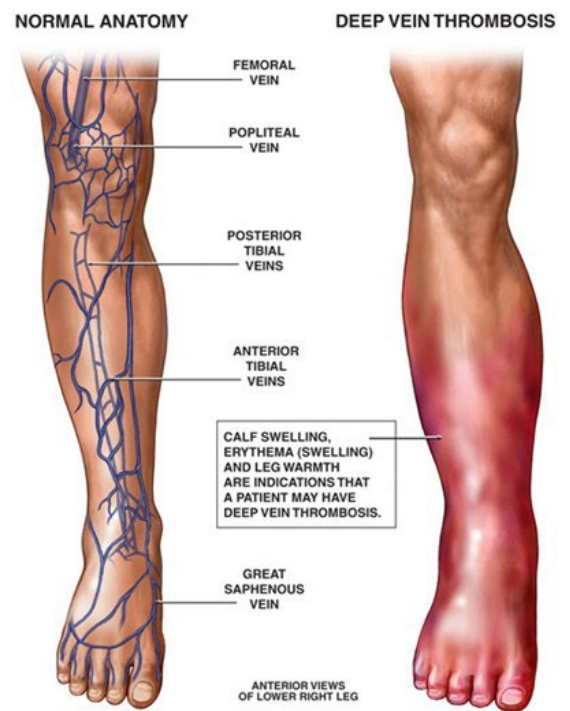
**Know the signs and symptoms of a blood clot.**

Blood clots in the leg:

- Swelling
- Pain
- Redness, tenderness or warmth

Blood clots in the lung:

- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Coughing up blood
- Chest pain or pain in the rib cage area
- Increased heart rate



**If you experience any of these signs or symptoms, call your surgeon immediately. If you have difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, or chest pain, please call 911.**