

About Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

This condition is a blood clot that forms in a vein deep inside the body, most commonly in the lower leg or thigh. This type of clot is dangerous, because it can travel through the bloodstream and into one of the pulmonary arteries that supply blood to the lungs. A blockage of a pulmonary artery is a very serious condition called a pulmonary embolism, which can be fatal.

CAUSES

Deep vein thrombosis can be caused by immobilization, such as resting in bed after surgery or riding for long periods in an airplane seat, injury, diabetes, obesity, smoking or pregnancy.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms can include pain in the leg, tenderness in the calf, swelling and warmth of the leg, a reddish or bluish skin coloration, and discomfort when the foot is lifted.

TREATMENT

Treatment options include bed rest with the affected leg elevated, warm compresses, compression stockings, and medications to thin the blood and break up clots. In severe cases, surgery may be needed to remove the clot or implant a filter to prevent the clot from reaching the lungs.



