

What to know about blood clots

Healthy blood is designed to clot. When blood clots, it prevents heavy bleeding. But, if a clot happens in a deep vein, it can be dangerous. This is called a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Sometimes, the blood clot may move through the body and get stuck in the lungs. This is called a pulmonary embolism (PE).



SIGNS OF A CLOT

Signs of a DVT or PE include:

- Swelling, tenderness, redness or warmth in one area of the body
- Chest heaviness or pain
- Sweating
- Feeling out of breath
- Weakness or fainting
- Fast heart beat, rapid breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Pain with deep breathing
- Feeling of impending doom

KNOW YOUR RISK

Certain things make you more likely to get a blood clot. They include:

- Prolonged bed rest due to surgery or illness
- Not moving a certain body part, such as a broken leg
- Sitting for a long time, such as car or plane trips
- Higher levels of estrogen from birth control pills, pregnancy or hormone replacement therapy
- Medical conditions, such as cancer, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, heart disease, blood clotting disorders or lung disease
- Obesity
- Smoking
- History of atrial fibrillation (A-fib)
- Personal or family history or DVT

REDUCE YOUR RISK

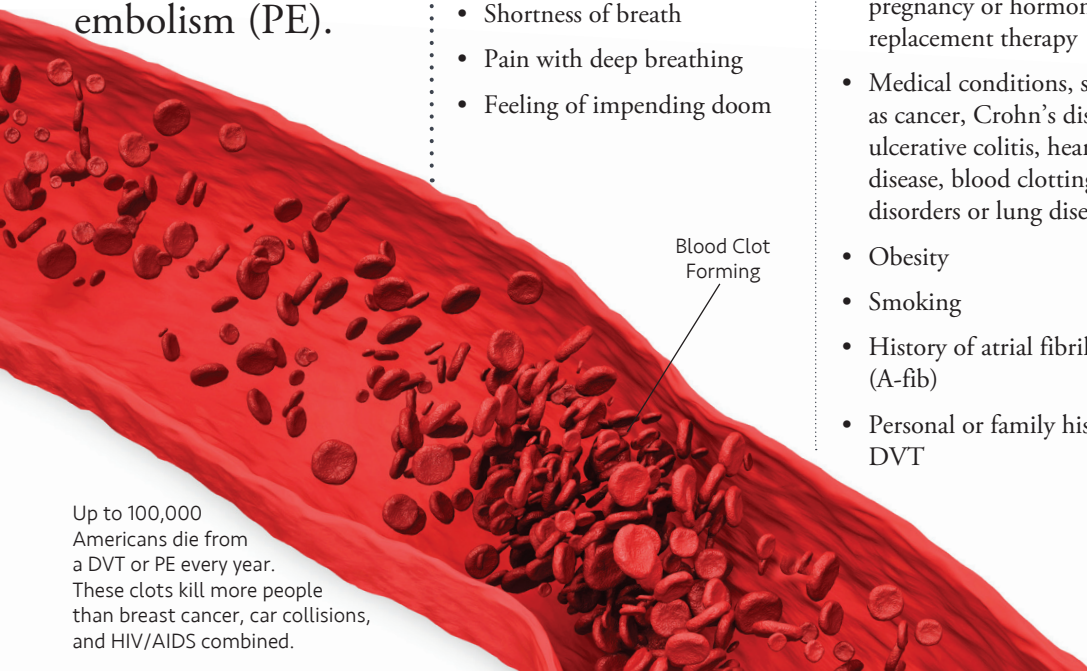
Talk about your risk with your doctor.

You can lower your risk of getting a blood clot by:

- Getting up from sitting at least every two hours
- Moving around after surgery or being in bed for a long time
- Moving legs and feet while on plane trips
- Wearing loose-fitting clothes while sitting for a long time
- Exercising regularly
- Wearing compression stockings if recommended by your doctor

WHAT TO DO?

If you think you or a loved one might have a blood clot, see a doctor right away or seek emergency medical care. A blood clot can be treated if it's caught early. Sometimes, doctors use medicines that dissolve the clot. Other times, doctors will perform surgery to remove the clot.



Up to 100,000 Americans die from a DVT or PE every year. These clots kill more people than breast cancer, car collisions, and HIV/AIDS combined.