

# DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

## What you need to know

**Definition:** a **DVT** is a blood clot in a deep vein. It is when a cluster of cells start to adhere to the vein wall making it difficult for blood to flow or circulate. The blood clot or clots can cause swelling and pain in the affected area of the vein. It can cause partial or full obstruction of the circulation of the vein and the clot can break off and travel in the circulatory system to the lung and cause a PE or pulmonary embolism.

### Signs/Symptoms of a DVT:

- ♥ Pain in the affected area
- ♥ Redness or discolored skin
- ♥ Swelling in the affected leg
- ♥ A spot that is warm or tender to touch
- ♥ Typically located in the legs in the femoral vein, the popliteal vein and the pelvis, but have been noted to be in arms
- ♥ Symptoms may be mild and go unnoticed

**Risk Factors:** blood clots can be caused by anything that prevents your blood from circulating such as trauma or injury, surgeries, underlying medical conditions, limited movement or immobility, paralysis, pregnancy, inherited clotting disorders or previous history of DVT's.

**Prevention:** a DVT can result in serious, life-threatening complications; however, many DVTs and related complications are preventable. Knowing the risk factors and signs and symptoms and seeking treatment as soon as you suspect a problem are important ways to avoid complications.

- ♥ **Avoid injury or trauma**, especially to your lower legs; take care not to bump, cut or bruise them.
- ♥ **Maintain a healthy weight.** Excessive weight puts pressure on your pelvis and legs, increasing your chances of developing a blood clot. Opt for healthier foods, limit portion sizes, and establish a suitable fitness routine.
- ♥ **Develop/maintain an active lifestyle.** A sedentary lifestyle can contribute to developing a DVT. When possible, avoid sitting for prolonged periods. Sitting restricts blood flow to the legs, one of the leading causes of DVT. Get up and move every couple of hours. Include activities in your life: (walking, biking, swimming, hiking, bicycling)
- ♥ **Avoid smoking.** Smoking damages the circulatory system and decreases blood flow, making clot formation easier. Smoking can also contribute to high blood pressure.
- ♥ **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of water and avoid caffeine such as coffee and alcohol as they can dehydrate you, which will narrow your veins and thicken your blood.
- ♥ **Recovery after surgery.** This can cause your blood to slow down, increasing your chance of developing a blood clot. After surgery to get up and move as soon after surgery as you can and exercise regularly after you recover.
- ♥ **If you are flying or traveling**, be sure to get up and walk every couple of hours and stretch your calf muscles by curling your toes to the floor and lifting your heels then putting your heels down and repeating this several times.
- ♥ **Elevate your legs** if they tend to swell to aid in circulation. Avoid constrictive clothing. Ask your doctor if he/she recommends compression socks.
- ♥ **Take your prescribed anticoagulant therapy medication.** If you have had a blood clot before, be sure to take your medication as prescribed, and get any lab work ordered by your doctor.

**Complications:** most life threatening/fatal is a pulmonary embolism (PE), where a clot breaks off and goes to your lung; and post-thrombotic syndrome, which can increase your risk for cellulitis.

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# ANXIETY

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## SUPPORTING OTHERS WITH ANXIETY

- Don't force confrontation. Don't force a person to do something they are afraid of.
- Provide validation. Other people's anxiety doesn't have to make sense to you, but it is important to understand that what they are experiencing is real and requires sensitivity.
- Express Concern. Approach them in a warm, positive way. You can start by telling them you have noticed a change in their behavior. You might ask them if you can help them cope with their anxiety.
- Guide them back to reality. For those who have exaggerated the "horrible outcome," help guide them to real, more positive thoughts.
- Brainstorm together. Sometimes there are steps to solving an issue or a negative thought that may be causing anxiety. Help brainstorm a solution or a plan.
- Help them stay connected. Set up video chats or phone calls with family and friends so there is still communication between them so they can know how everyone is doing.
- Online Purpose. Having a purpose helps build self-esteem, helping others builds self esteem, is there something that can be done on line to help support others? Even a simple blog or start a support group.
- Help them focus on the positive. Happy thoughts = happy brain. People are happier focusing on positive thoughts. Sometimes it is difficult when anxiety overcomes us to stay positive. Helping others do this over and over helps the brain become more automatic in producing these happier, more positive thoughts.
- Help them create a daily routine. Create a schedule to identify what can be done each hour of the day. Include things like, exercising, cooking meals, cleaning, reaching out to family and friends.
- Help them label their emotions. Putting a name to emotions can help to ease them. Check in with those you are supporting. Help them identify how they are feeling: overwhelmed? Frustrated? Sad? Confused? Acknowledging feelings can help them move forward.
- Help them balance their emotions with logic. Experiencing intense feelings is normal in a crisis, but leads to unhelpful, sometimes catastrophic, thoughts, which can fuel anxiety. Balancing emotions means looking at the facts and reminding others that things may be tough right now but pandemics end, economies rebound and people survive.
- Help them externalize their anxiety. Externalizing anxiety can help those suffering recognize how it affects them and how they can fight it. People may want to journal or participate in art therapy.

### **Tips: Talking to others about COVID19**

- Don't be afraid to discuss the coronavirus. Not talking about something can actually produce more anxiety. Use this opportunity to convey the facts.
- Be developmentally appropriate. Don't volunteer too much information, as this may be overwhelming. Instead, try to answer their questions. Do your best to answer honestly and clearly. It's okay if you can't answer everything; being available is what matters.
- Take your cues. Invite them to talk about what they have heard about the coronavirus, and how they feel. Give them ample opportunity to ask questions. You want to be prepared to answer (but not prompt) questions. Your goal is to avoid encouraging frightening fantasies.
- Deal with your own anxiety: If you notice that you are feeling anxious, take some time to calm down before trying to have a conversation or answer questions.
- Be reassuring. Hearing about the coronavirus on the news may be enough to make people seriously worry that they'll catch it. It's helpful to reassure them that the safety precautions that are being taken will help slow the spread of the Coronavirus.
- Focus on what you're doing to stay safe. An important way to reassure others is to emphasize the safety precautions that you are taking. People feel empowered when they know what to do to keep themselves safe.
- Keep talking. Tell others that you will continue to keep them updated as you learn more. Let them know that the lines of communication are open.

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# ANXIETY

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## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

### Ways to relieve anxiety during the pandemic:

- \* Listening to reliable news sources
- \* Limit the amount of news you watch or listen to
- \* Recognize what you can control; let go of what you cannot
- \* Develop an action plan
- \* Practice self care

### SELF CARE TIPS

- \* Get help early - the earlier one gets help, the easier and the less amount of time for recovery.
- \* Stay active - exercising is the body's natural way of combating stress and anxiety.
- \* Eat a healthy diet - Foods such as onions, mushrooms and garlic can help with anxiety.
- \* Avoid Caffeine - Caffeine stimulates the "flight or flight" response, which can make anxiety worse.
- \* Avoid alcohol and drugs - Some drugs and alcohol can cause anxiety either before or after use.
- \* Practice Deep Breathing - To trigger a relaxing response, breathe in 3 seconds then exhale for 6.
- \* Body therapies (yoga, Tai Chi, etc.)
- \* Check your thoughts - Are the thoughts you are experiencing good thoughts or bad thoughts? Write them down, this helps get what you are thinking, out of your head. Ask, can I absolutely know this is true? Try flipping your thoughts to see if the opposite is true or not. If you practice this, it will help train you to manage your mind.
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(Sources: <https://www.verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909>, 3/31/2020  
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PFQ email about talking to your kids about coronavirus