

# BLOOD CLOTS

*An Informative Newsletter for People with Mobility Disabilities.*



## WHY

People with mobility disabilities are at an increased risk for blood clots, because immobility or lack of movement can cause blood to pool and clots to form. It's important to be aware of this risk because blood clots can become dangerous.

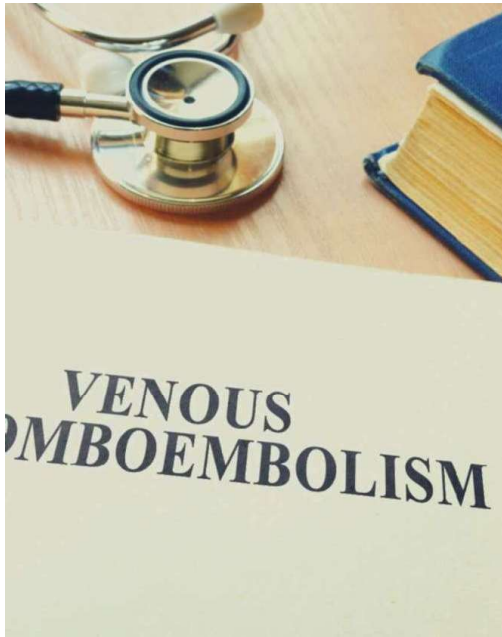
## HOW

When someone spends a lot of their time sitting or lying down, whether in a wheelchair, armchair, bed, etc., that immobility can increase the likelihood that they may develop a blood clot in their leg or arm.

## BEWARE

A blood clot that starts in the leg or arm can grow and break out to the lungs, which can be life-threatening. That's why it's crucial to know the symptoms of blood clots. Let's go over the medical terms and dive deeper into the kinds of dangerous (often deadly) blood clots and prevention strategies.



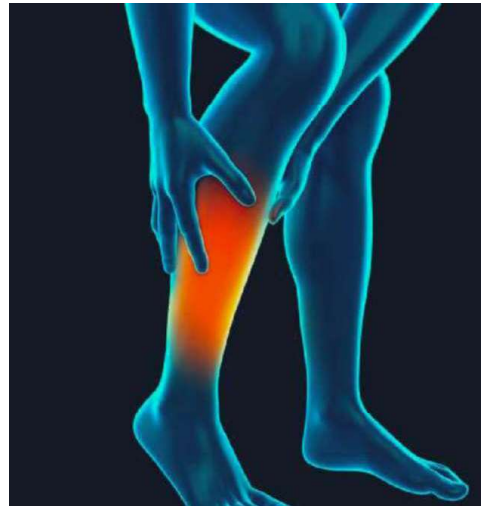


## WHAT IS VTE?

When a clot develops in a place that blocks blood flow or oxygen to parts of your body, it can be dangerous and even fatal and is considered venous thromboembolism (VTE). VTE is a blood clot that started in a vein.

## WHAT IS DVT?

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a clot that develops in the deep veins of a limb, usually a person's leg, but can also occur in a person's arm.



## WHAT IS PE?

If DVT is not treated, it can break off or grow larger and travel to a person's lung, where it becomes life-threatening. A blood clot in the lung is called a pulmonary embolism or PE.



## SIGNS

Symptoms of a blood clot in the leg or arm can include pain or a cramping feeling, discolored skin or skin is warm to the touch.

Symptoms of a blood clot in the lung can include difficulty breathing, chest pain, coughing up blood, fast or irregular heartbeat.

## OTHER RISKS

Other factors that might increase your risk include: Major surgery or physical trauma; cancer; pregnancy; the use of hormone therapy for birth control or the treatment of menopause symptoms; obesity; and smoking.



## MANAGEMENT

There are a spectrum of treatment options to help prevent and treat blood clots, including the use of medications. Talk to your doctor about your risks and the best prevention or treatment plan for you.



## PREVENTION

If you are a person with a mobility disability, you can reduce your risk of blood clots by moving your legs (or asking someone else to move your legs for you) every 2 to 3 hours, changing your position often (lying, to sitting, to standing if possible), and wearing loose-fitting clothing. Ask your doctor if wearing compression stockings to help improve blood flow is a good fit for you.

## FINAL NOTE

Since the signs and symptoms vary in every individual case, we recommend erring on the side of caution. If you have ANY of the signs and symptoms and risk factors mentioned, seek medical attention immediately.



Learn more at [www.aahd.us/vte](http://www.aahd.us/vte)



American Association  
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