

# Discharge Instructions for Pulmonary Embolism



A deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a blood clot in a large vein deep in a leg, arm, or elsewhere in the body. The clot can separate from the vein, travel to the lungs, and cut off blood flow. This is a pulmonary embolism (PE). Pulmonary embolism is very serious and may cause death if the clot is large or there are multiple clots.

## Home care

Taking care of yourself is very important. To help prevent more blood clots from forming, follow your healthcare provider's instructions. Do the following:

- Take your medicines exactly as instructed. Don't skip doses. If you miss a dose, call your healthcare provider and ask what you should do.
- Have all lab tests as recommended. This is very important when you take medicines to prevent blood clots.
- If your healthcare provider has instructed you to do so, wear elastic (compression stockings).
- Get up and get moving.
- While sitting for long periods of time, move your knees, ankles, feet, and toes.

## Lifestyle changes

To help prevent problems with your heart and blood vessels, do the following:

- If you smoke, get help to quit. Talk with your healthcare provider about medicines and programs that can help.
- Stay at a healthy weight. If you are overweight, talk to your healthcare provider about losing weight.
- Try to exercise at least 30 minutes on most days. Before starting an exercise program, talk with your healthcare provider.
- When traveling by car, make frequent stops to get up and move around.
- On long airplane rides, get up and move around when possible. If you can't get up, wiggle your toes, move your ankles, and tighten your calves to keep your blood moving.

## Follow-up care

Make a follow-up appointment as directed. Have your lab work done as directed.

## When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have:

- Pain, swelling, and redness in your leg, arm, or other body area. These symptoms may mean another blood clot.
- Blood in your urine
- Bleeding with bowel movements

- Bleeding from the nose, gums, a cut, or vagina

## Call 911

Call 911 if you have symptoms of a blood clot in the lungs:

- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Coughing (may cough up blood)
- Fast heartbeat
- Sweating
- Fainting

Also call 911 if you have heavy or uncontrolled bleeding. If you are taking a blood thinner, you have an increased chance of bleeding.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions  
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.