



Thromboembolism (Blood Clot)

What is thromboembolism?

Thromboembolism is when a blood clot causes a block in a blood vessel. Thromboembolism is an emergency.

People with cancer have a greater risk of a blood clot forming, especially during active treatment or if they have advanced cancer. Types of thromboembolism are:

- [Deep vein thrombosis \(DVT\)](#).
- Pulmonary embolism (PE).
- A stroke or a heart attack can also be caused by a thromboembolism.

What are the signs and symptoms of thromboembolism?

The signs and symptoms of thromboembolism depend on where the clot is and where it breaks off. Some signs and symptoms include:

- Leg pain, heaviness, or tenderness in the thigh or calf.
- Red, warm skin in one area.
- Swelling of the leg (especially in just one leg).
- Red streaks on the leg.
- Shortness of breath, especially when it is sudden.
- Rapid breathing.
- Coughing up blood.
- Sharp chest pain, which may be worse with a deep breath in.
- Heart beating fast.
- Feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or faint.

How is thromboembolism managed?

Prevention of thromboembolism is key. If you are at greater risk of thromboembolism, your care team may order anticoagulation medication (“blood thinners”) to keep your blood from forming clots. If you are having signs of a thromboembolism, there are imaging tests and scans that can be done to tell if a clot has caused a blockage. Blood clots are most often treated in the hospital.

When should I contact my care team?

If you have any of the symptoms listed above, go to your local emergency room or call 911 right away.

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