

Blood Clots

What is it?

Deep venous thrombosis, or DVT, are blood clots that form in veins in your legs or pelvis. Sometimes these clots can form in the arms or neck. Pulmonary embolism, or blood clots in the lungs, are caused by blood clots in the legs, arms, pelvis, or neck that break loose and travel to the lungs.

Risks and symptoms

Symptoms of blood clots in the legs include swelling, pain, and warmth and redness in the involved arm or leg. Symptoms of blood clots in the lungs include panting or trouble breathing, sharp chest pain, coughing or coughing up blood, or a rapid heartbeat. If you have any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1. You can reduce the chance of forming blood clots on a long trip by standing up and walking around every couple of hours, not smoking before a trip, wearing loose clothes, moving frequently, and drinking fluids.

Treatment

Blood clots are treated with medicines that help dissolve clots or keep them from getting bigger. The most common medicine for clots is warfarin (sold as Coumadin). Warfarin is taken for at least 3 months after the clot is found, and it prevents new clots from forming.