**Patient Information Sheet**

**You Have a DVT**

**Deep Vein Thrombosis**

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**What is a DVT?**

A DVT is a blood clot in the deep vein of the leg.

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**Why are DVTs important?**

They can cause short term and long term pain and swelling in the leg. They can move to the lung (pulmonary embolism = PE) and these may cause death.

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**What can cause a DVT?**

- Immobility
  - Being in bed for a few days or more
  - Cast on the leg, not able to stand or walk
  - Air travel for 6 or more hours
- Injury to blood vessels
  - Broken bones, accidents
  - Major surgery
- “Hypercoagulability” (tendency to clot)
  - Medical conditions (such as cancer)
  - Hormones (estrogen, pregnancy)
  - Genetic risk factors/family history of DVT/PE

**Ask your doctor about other risk factors.**

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**Treatment**

- DVT is treated with anticoagulants (“blood thinners”)
- Usually pills, but you may start on injections first
- How long you are on treatment will depend on your risk of having another blood clot and your risk of bleeding, but is usually at least 3 months
- Treatment is sometimes long term
- Main side effect is bleeding:
  - Minor (nose/gum bleeds, bruising)
  - Major (coughing blood, blood in vomit, urine or stool, black stool)

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**Take Away Message**

- DVT is serious and can lead to life threatening complications
- Anticoagulant treatment should be taken regularly the way your doctor tells you
- Tell your doctor if you have new symptoms of a blood clot or major bleeding

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**Common Iliac Vein**

**Internal Iliac Vein**

**External Iliac Vein**

**Common Femoral Vein**

**Femoral Vein**

**Greater Saphenous Vein**

**Popliteal Vein**

**Lesser Saphenous Vein**

**Anterior Tibial Vein**

**Posterior Tibial Vein**

**Peroneal Vein**