

Suspected Deep Vein Thrombosis

It is suspected that you may have a blood clot in the deep veins of your leg.

The clot in the leg itself is not life threatening. However, if it comes loose it can be carried in the blood to another part of the body where it can cause problems – this is called venous thrombo-embolism. If the clot is carried to the lungs it is called a pulmonary embolism, which can be fatal.

While awaiting the scan of your leg, you will be given some treatment to prevent this.

The Scan

An ultrasound scan can show the inside of the veins and whether they are clear of clots or not.

If you saw your doctor in the morning, the scan may well be in the afternoon, or the following morning if it was later in the day. If you were seen on a Friday or over the weekend you may have your scan on Monday morning as the next working day.

This is a potentially serious condition, so please make sure you are available for the scan.

If you have not had the appointment time confirmed within 4 working hours of leaving your appointment with your doctor, please ring the surgery, who should be able to help.

The Anticoagulants

You should be offered some tablets to start immediately and to take every 12 hours until your doctor tells you to stop. These initially prevent the clot getting larger or spreading while your body slowly removes the clot.

These make the blood clot more slowly so if you cut yourself you may bleed for longer. You will be given an **Alert Card**. Please carry this with you while you take this medication, in case of emergencies.

Make an appointment at your doctors

Please make an appointment at your surgery for the next routine working day so your doctor can discuss your scan result with you. Please check this is after your scan appointment.

The Ultrasound result

If the scan was clear, this is good news and your doctor will advise you to stop the Anticoagulant tablets. He or she will also talk to you about other causes for your leg to be swollen and painful. If the scan is clear please ignore the rest of this leaflet.

If the scan shows a clot in the deep veins of your leg, this is known as a **Deep Vein Thrombosis or DVT**. You should continue taking the anticoagulants for three months. The dose will reduce after 1 or 3 weeks depending on the choice of tablet.

If the scan showed a DVT then your doctor will discuss with you why these clots occur.

Provoked DVT

There are conditions and medications that are known to make these clots more likely. It can happen in people known to have cancer, or after trauma, surgery, significant immobility, during and after pregnancy, or while taking HRT or hormonal contraception.

If there is no apparent cause then your doctor will offer you further examinations to exclude any undiscovered causes

Unprovoked DVT

DVTs can occur without any cause, but it is wise to consider possible causes. Because of this your doctor may well offer to examine you further, to test a sample of urine and to take a blood sample.

Stopping the Anticoagulants

If you have never had a DVT before, once you have been on this treatment for 3 months, you should discuss stopping the medication with your doctor. It may be that your doctor would like to do a blood test prior to stopping the medication.

If this is not the first DVT or clot that you have had, then your doctor will discuss lifelong treatment.

For more information

NHS Choices website

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Deep-vein-thrombosis>

NHS Fit for Travel

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/advice-for-travellers/deep-vein-thrombosis.aspx>

Patient.co.uk

<http://www.patient.co.uk>

AntiCoagulation Europe, 020 8289 6875

www.anticoagulationeurope.org

Lifeblood: The Thrombosis Charity

01558 650222

www.thrombosis-charity.org.uk

Surgery Name

Suspected Deep Vein Thrombosis

It is suspected that you might have a clot in the deep veins of your leg. This is potentially serious and as a result you have been offered a ultrasound scan of your leg veins. You will also be given a course of anticoagulant tablets to reduce the clotting of your blood. This will help prevent serious complications.

Scan Time and Date

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Review Appointment at Surgery

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Contacts

Surgery Number