

Maternal DVT Patient Information

BE AWARE!

Do you know the signs and symptoms of blood clots in pregnancy or after having a baby?

All pregnant and postpartum women are at higher risk for blood clots. Blood clots in pregnant women usually form in the deep veins of the legs or in the pelvic area. This condition is known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT). These blood clots can break off and move to different parts of your body like the lungs or brain and be life-threatening to you or your baby.

Symptoms to watch for during pregnancy and up to six weeks after your baby is born:

- Extreme swelling in your leg (or arm), especially in your calf and thigh
- Leg pain, tenderness, or persistent cramping
- Leg (or arm) warmer to the touch than other parts of the body
- Redness or bluish skin discoloration
- Severe shortness of breath
- Persistent or increasing headache and/or vision problems
- Irregular heartbeat or chest pains
- Fainting or feeling anxious
- Coughing up blood

Any woman can develop blood clots in pregnancy or afterwards, but you are at higher risk if you:

- Have a personal or family history of blood clots
- Have a thrombophilia (blood clotting disorder)
- Smoke
- Are overweight
- Sit or lie still for long periods of time due to bed rest or long car or air travel
- Are over 35 years old
- Have a caesarean delivery of your baby
- Take estrogen containing oral contraceptives
- Have any combination of the above risk factors

What should I do if I have any of these symptoms and they don't go away?

- IMMEDIATELY contact your obstetrician, midwife, family medicine doctor or your primary care provider.
- Describe your symptoms clearly and explain how sick you feel, including any feelings of anxiety or dread.
- If your symptoms occur postpartum, be sure to tell the provider you recently had a baby.
- If your provider says your symptoms are normal, ask what symptoms should cause you to call or come back.

When should I seek EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE?

- If you have severe shortness of breath or feel extremely sick.
- If you are very sick and there isn't someone to drive you, call 9-1-1.
- If you are pregnant, make every effort to go to a hospital where there is obstetric (OB) care.