

Blood Clots and Cancer: Know the Risks

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LEARN!

Patients with cancer are at risk for developing blood clots. This condition is called **deep vein thrombosis**, or **DVT**. DVT occurs when a blood clot forms in a large vein. These clots usually develop in the lower leg, thigh or pelvis. Occasionally, portions of the blood clot can break off and migrate through the circulatory system to the lungs, a condition called **pulmonary embolism**, or **PE**. PE may be life threatening.

Patients with Cancer

- Are at an even higher risk for DVT/PE if hospitalized for surgery or acute illness or are receiving chemotherapy treatments.
- May develop DVT in unusual areas, such as in the abdomen or around a catheter (for example, central catheters, ports, or PICC lines).
- Have a higher risk of bleeding while taking blood thinning medication for DVT/PE.

Prevention is key.

What are the symptoms and signs of DVT/PE?

Often DVT/PE are silent and go undetected, but typical symptoms include:

Symptoms for DVT can include:

- Recent swelling of a limb (arm or leg)
- Unexplained limb pain or tenderness (arm or leg)
- Skin that is warm to the touch
- Skin redness

Symptoms for PE can include:

- Recent or sudden shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Coughing up blood
- Sudden collapse
- Feeling of apprehension



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