CLEARING THE CLOT
GET CLARITY ABOUT DVT TREATMENTS

While blood thinners and compression stockings are usually the first line of treatment for DVT blood clots, there are also a variety of minimally invasive procedures that may help reduce your risk of long-term complications such as post-thrombotic syndrome (PTS). Bring this guide to your next appointment to talk to your doctor about the right treatment options for you.

IV CLOT BUSTERS

What They Are: IV clot busters, also known as thrombolytics, are medications placed directly into a blood clot through an intravenous catheter.

How They Work: IV clot busters are designed to quickly dissolve blood clots, restore blood flow, and may help prevent post-thrombotic syndrome. However, these procedures come with risks and aren’t right for everyone. Be sure to talk to your doctor to find out if they may be right for you.

MECHANICAL THROMBECTOMY

What it Is: A minimally invasive procedure where your doctor inserts a device through a catheter that is designed to either dissolve or remove all or portions of the blood clot.

How it Works: Mechanical thrombectomy devices are designed to quickly dissolve blood clots, restore blood flow, reduce the amount and duration of medications you have to take, and help prevent your risk for long-term complications such as post-thrombotic syndrome. Your doctor may also deliver IV clot buster medicines during the procedure. These procedures come with risks and aren’t right for everyone. Be sure to ask your doctor if they may be right for you.

REDUCING YOUR RISK OF POST-THROMBOTIC SYNDROME

Many blood clots will be absorbed by your body over time with the help of blood thinners. But in the meantime, the clot can cause permanent damage to the valves in your veins. This can cause post-thrombotic syndrome, which results in chronic pain and swelling. Mechanical thrombectomy and IV clot busters may help reduce your risk of developing long-term complications such as PTS.

UP TO 50% OF PEOPLE WITH DVT WILL DEVELOP PTS
FILTERS

What It Is: A small metal filter inserted into a large vein (the Inferior Vena Cava) through a catheter. This is the main vein that takes blood from your lower body to your heart.

How It Works: The filter won’t treat your existing blood clot or stop new ones from forming. However, it helps prevent clots from entering your lungs and causing a pulmonary embolism, a serious and potentially deadly complication of DVT.

BLOOD THINNERS

What They Are: Medications delivered in either pill or injection form. Blood thinner injections (commonly heparin) start working quickly, while pills (commonly warfarin or Coumadin) take two to three days to kick in. So your doctor will likely treat you with both for the first few days.

How They Work: Although they’re called blood thinners, they don’t actually thin your blood. They decrease your blood’s ability to clot, which keeps an existing clot from getting bigger while your body slowly reabsorbs it, and helps prevent new clots from forming. All blood thinners come with bleeding risks, so be sure to ask your doctor about ways to minimize your risk.

COMPRESSION STOCKINGS

What They Are: Compression stockings, also called graduated compression stockings, are specialized socks that are tighter at the ankle and gradually become looser as they go up your legs. Your doctor will work with you to find the right pressure level, length, and size for your needs.

How They Work: Compression stockings gently squeeze your legs to improve blood flow and help relieve leg pain and swelling associated with DVT.

NOTES

Use this space to add questions for your doctor and take notes during your appointment.

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