

# Blood clots and YOU

**YOU** are more at risk of developing a **BLOOD CLOT** after surgery or a procedure than when you take a long-distance flight.

What can **YOU** do to reduce your **RISK**?

**WATER**



**ACTIVITY**



**COMPRESSION**



Want more information?

[www.southerncrosshospitals.co.nz/patient-information/blood-clots](http://www.southerncrosshospitals.co.nz/patient-information/blood-clots)

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Health Quality & Safety  
Commission



## My risk factors

Blood clots can develop in your legs and pelvis and can be dangerous if they travel through your body and block blood supply to your lungs.

Admission to hospital to undertake treatment puts you at **HIGH** risk of **BLOOD CLOTS**.

If any of the following apply, **YOU** are at **HIGHER RISK** of developing a blood clot (ask your doctor what blood clots treatment is needed).

- I am having a surgical operation or procedure
- I have had a blood clot in the past
- Someone in my family has had a blood clot
- I am a smoker
- I have cancer and/or am undertaking cancer treatment or therapy
- I have a chronic illness/blood disease
- I have varicose veins
- I am over 40 years old
- I am overweight
- I am pregnant or have recently given birth
- I am on the contraceptive pill
- I am undertaking hormone replacement therapy
- I am on steroids
- I have not been physically active (e.g. walking) recently
- I have recently taken a long-distance flight

## What actions can I take to reduce my risk of **BLOOD CLOTS**?



### Drink the recommended amount of water

Adequate water intake helps blood stay fluid for good blood flow. Reduced water intake could thicken the blood.



### Keep active

Frequent light activity (e.g. getting up, walking around and leg exercises) helps to move blood around the legs, reducing the risk of blood sitting and clotting in the veins.



### Wear compression stockings

Compression stockings squeeze the legs, reducing the diameter of the veins and improving blood flow.

# My recovery plan

Your doctors, nurses and the information on our website can help you to complete your plan.

My discharge date: \_\_\_\_\_

**How much water should I drink everyday for the next 8 weeks?** \_\_\_\_\_

## My activity prescription

Week 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Week 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Week 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Week 6 \_\_\_\_\_

Week 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Week 7 \_\_\_\_\_

Week 4 \_\_\_\_\_ Week 8 \_\_\_\_\_

**How long should I wear my compression stockings?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Medication plan:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Signs I should watch for

*Raised temperature (fever) or chills*

*Feeling unwell*

*Feeling pain or discomfort in your pelvis*

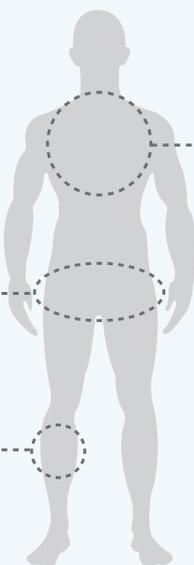
*Redness, pain, swelling, or tenderness in your leg*



**Contact your surgeon (and/or GP) immediately** if you experience any of these symptoms, or any others that concern you.

**Phone contacts:**

\_\_\_\_\_



*Sudden shortness of breath and/or pain in your chest*

*Coughing up blood-streaked mucus*



These symptoms indicate an **emergency**. Call the ambulance on **111** and inform them of your symptoms and recent surgery.

## Your checklist to:

- Complete the pre-admission risk assessment
- Ask your doctor what blood clots treatment is needed
- Bring this brochure into hospital
- Before you go home, ensure you understand what to do, talk with your nurses and doctors and write up your recovery plan.

*If applicable:*

I understand my blood thinning medication plan:

- Before coming to hospital
- When I go home.

*Apply adhesive name label here*

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