

General information

The following symptoms (either new or getting worse) may be a sign you have a clot and you should get immediate medical advice from your GP, NHS 24 or your nearest hospital emergency department:

- tight, throbbing pain in the leg (usually in the calf)
- swelling of the legs and or arm
- heat or redness of the leg and or arm
- shortness of breath
- coughing up blood
- blood in your spit
- chest pain

Further information:

If you have any questions while in hospital, please ask a member of your health care team.

If you need any advice after you go home, please contact your GP Practice or NHS 24 (telephone number 111).

References:

The information contained within this leaflet is based on guidance published in the Scottish Intercollegiate Guideline Network (SIGN), guideline number 122, 'Prophylaxis of Venous Thromboembolism' available at: www.sign.ac.uk.

Also from stocking manufacturers

Reducing your risk of blood clots after discharge from hospital

Information for adults who need to wear anti-embolism stockings (AES)



Anyone can be at risk of developing a blood clot. However, some people are at greater risk than others. For example, if you are overweight, pregnant, having an operation, are elderly or have cancer. One way to help prevent clots developing is to wear anti-embolism stockings (AES).

Anti-embolism stockings (AES) and why you need to wear them

The stockings help to lower the risk of a blood clot developing by gently supporting the leg which helps the flow of blood. They are made from firm elastic and are tightest from the ankle upwards (called graduated compression).

Information when wearing your stockings

- You should keep wearing anti-embolism stockings until you are back to your normal mobility. If you are not sure, contact your local healthcare provider for advice.
- Remove them daily so that you can wash your legs, have a bath or shower.
- Check your legs, feet and toes for any new issues with:

- pain, soreness or discomfort
- redness
- bruising
- discolouring (blue or white)
- cold
- tingling, pins and needles
- numbness
- a rash (you maybe allergic to the material)

If you do have any of these symptoms, stop wearing the stockings and contact your local healthcare provider for advice.

- Wear slippers or shoes as the stockings can be very slippery on hard floors.
- Gentle bending and straightening your foot and ankle, keeping your knees straight, stretches your calf muscles helping with blood flow. You can do this sitting in a chair or in your bed, as often as you can.

Things you should avoid

- ✗ Never give your stockings to someone else to wear. They are measured to fit your legs.
- ✗ Oil should not be used to moisturise the skin on the foot and leg as this can damage the stocking elastic.

- ✗ Do not wear if they are damp or wet.
- ✗ Do not turn down the tops as this can restrict the flow of blood in your legs and may cause damage to your legs.

How to care for your stockings

- Put clean stockings on every three days (or sooner if they become dirty).
- They can be washed either by hand or by machine at no more than 40 degrees centigrade (40°C) using a mild soap powder, no bleach.
- You can use the spin cycle if washing in a machine. If hand washing, squeeze excess water out but do not wring them.
- Let them dry naturally. Do not tumble dry or place on a radiator.
- Do not iron them.
- If they develop ladders, holes or are damaged in any way you must not use them. Request new ones from your GP surgery.