

Medication after discharge from hospital to reduce your risk of blood clots.

Your hospital team may assess that you need medication when you go home. This may be in the form of injections, or tablets such as Aspirin or Rivaroxaban. If you need injections, the ward staff will explain this to you before you leave the hospital. If you are prescribed Aspirin or Rivaroxaban then it is essential you take these for the time indicated - this may be for a number of weeks. Often if you are discharged home on Aspirin for the first time (i.e. you have not been on it before coming into hospital) it will be to reduce your blood clot risk especially after surgery and it generally will not be for pain relief. If you have any issues such as heartburn please discuss this with your GP.

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 on ☎ 111 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 ☎ 111.

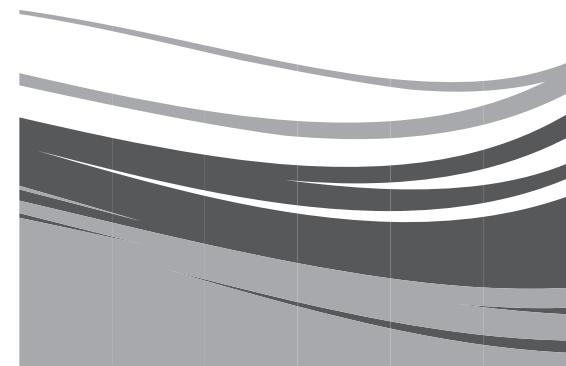
References

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



What are blood clots?

Blood clots are gel-like clumps of blood that can develop in the deep veins of the leg or arm, preventing blood from flowing normally. These clumps can sometimes break off and travel to the lung.

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 surgery, are elderly or have cancer. One way to help prevent clots developing is to wear anti-embolism stockings (AES).

What are Anti-embolism stockings (AES) and why do I need to wear them?

These stockings help to lower the risk of a blood clot developing by gently supporting your 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 level of mobility. If you are not sure, please contact your local healthcare provider for advice.

- Remove them every day so that you can wash your legs, have a bath or shower.
- 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.
- 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 may be allergic to the material)

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

Things you should avoid

- X** Never give your stockings to someone else to wear. They are measured to fit your legs.
- X** Do not use oil to moisturise the skin on the foot and leg as this can damage the stocking elastic.
- X** Do not wear if they are damp or wet.
- X** 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).
- You can wash these 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.