

Focus On: Blood Clots

Blood clots are clumps of blood.

A blood clot can form in a blood vessel like a vein or an artery.

If a clot gets stuck in a blood vessel, it can cause serious problems like deep vein thrombosis or a pulmonary embolism.

Deep vein thrombosis is a blood clot in a deep vein, usually in the leg.

Symptoms of deep vein thrombosis include pain, swelling, redness or any change in color, or warmth in just one leg or arm.

A pulmonary embolism occurs when a blood clot breaks free and travels to the lungs, where it blocks blood flow.

Symptoms of pulmonary embolism include shortness of breath and sharp chest pain that's worse when you cough or take a deep breath. A pulmonary embolism can be life-threatening.

Anything that slows down blood flow or prevents blood from properly clotting can cause a blood clot.

Some examples include recent surgery, certain health conditions that limit how much you move, and long periods of travel, among others.

Blood clots in deep veins are most often treated with a blood thinner called an anticoagulant.

It can stop the clot from growing and prevent it from breaking and moving. It can also prevent new clots from forming. But there are other treatment options too.

To learn more about blood clots, talk to your doctor.