

What you should know . . .

PREVENTING INFECTIONS

North Austin Surgery Center is striving to help our patients understand how to reduce the risk of infection before and after surgery. Any surgical procedure, no matter how small, carries the risk of infection.

Prevention begins before surgery. Your doctor will make sure that no infections exist that may spread to cause problems with your surgery. Some actions you can take to help decrease the risk of developing a surgical site infection are:



- Avoid shaving near the proposed operative areas, it can irritate the skin
- Make sure you are eating nutritiously, your overall health is important
- Control your blood sugar; research shows this contributes to better outcomes
- Shower with antiseptic soap
- Stop tobacco use prior to surgery
- Tell your surgeon if you have any other infections
- Take antibiotics as prescribed, if ordered prior to surgery



One of the best things you can do to protect yourself before and after surgery is to clean your hands carefully and frequently!

- Use soap and warm water. Rub your hands thoroughly for at least 15 seconds. Rub your palms, fingernails, in between your fingers, and the backs of your hands.
- Or, if your hands have no visible dirt, clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Rub the sanitizer all over your hands, especially under your nails and in between your fingers, until your hands are dry.
- Clean your hands before touching or eating food. Clean them after you use the bathroom, take out the trash, change a diaper, visit someone who is ill, or play with a pet.

Before leaving the surgery center, you will be taught how to take care of your incision and dressing. If you develop an infection anywhere else in your body after surgery, let your doctor know. Some infections can spread and cause problems with the surgery. Here are some guidelines to help after surgery:

- Wash your hands before changing your bandage.
- Change your bandage as instructed.
- Don't get the incision wet unless your doctor tells you to.
- Don't put any medication on the incision unless your doctor tells you to.
- Don't scratch or pick at the incision.

If you develop any of the following infection warning signs, contact your doctor:

- Fever
- Increased redness or swelling
- Drainage from the wound that is cloudy, yellow, or foul smelling
- Pain that increases and becomes constant



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What you should know . . .

PREVENTION OF DVT/PE

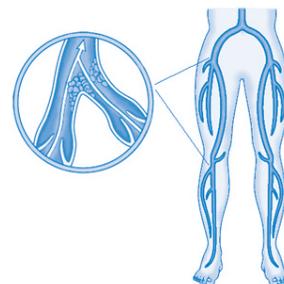
North Austin Surgery Center is striving to help our patients understand how to reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism. Any surgical procedure, no matter how small, carries the risk for a patient to develop deep vein thrombosis/pulmonary embolism.

Overview

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) is the condition known in lay terms as blood clots in the legs. In most cases your body routinely prevents the occurrence of these clots through several different processes on its own. However, during surgery and the period immediately following surgery, you may be at risk for this condition. Through several steps and exercises you'll find here, you can greatly reduce your risk of forming these potentially harmful clots and be on your way to recovery from your surgery.

When are you at risk?

- After surgery, a long illness in bed, or if you are traveling for long periods
- A history of DVT
- Pregnancy, on hormone replacement therapy, or using birth control pills
- Older than 60 (although DVT can occur at any age)
- Being overweight or obese



Reducing your risk:

- Get out of bed and move around as soon as possible after surgery or illness according to the instructions from your doctor.
- Exercising your lower leg muscles when sitting, lying down, or traveling for extended periods of time.
- Contact your doctor at once if you develop signs or symptoms of DVT or pulmonary embolism.



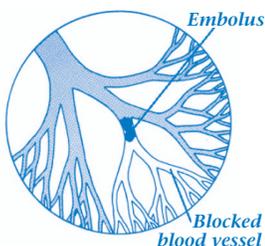
Signs & Symptoms of DVT:

- Swelling of the leg or along a vein in the leg
- Pain or tenderness in the leg, which you may feel only when standing or walking
- Increased warmth in the area of the leg that's swollen or in pain
- Red or discolored skin on the leg



Signs & Symptoms of Pulmonary Embolism:

- Unexplained shortness of breath
- Pain with deep breathing
- Coughing up blood
- Rapid breathing and a fast heart rate also may be signs of PE.



If you develop any signs or symptoms of DVT or Pulmonary Embolism, call your doctor immediately or go to the nearest E.R.

By following the instructions of your physician and the information found here, your risk and recovery time can be greatly reduced. We thank you for allowing us to provide your care and wish you a speedy recovery.

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