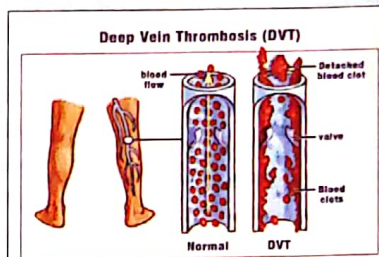


## **PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS**

### **1. What is a vein, superficial vein and deep vein?**

A vein is a blood vessel that carries deoxygenated blood towards the heart from the tissues. There are superficial and deep veins. Superficial veins are closer to the surface of the body, under the skin. Deep veins lie deeper in the body, underneath the muscles.



### **2. What is Deep Vein thrombosis?**

It is the formation of blood clots in a deep vein. It commonly affects leg veins.

### **3. What are the symptoms of DVT?**

Pain in your legs and this often starts in your calf and can feel like cramping, a sensation of heaviness in the legs, swelling, warmth over the affected area.

### **4. What are the risk factors?**

Prolonged bed rest due to any illness, after child birth, recent major surgery, connective tissue disorders, oral contraceptives or hormone pills, trauma/injury, thrombophilia (tendency to develop clots), cancer, long travels.

### **5. What is the treatment for DVT?**

The treatment for DVT are 1. Hospitalization or some times out patient treatment 2. Anticoagulation therapy i.e. Use of blood thinners 3. Thrombolysis i.e. use of clot dissolving drugs in few 4. Compression stockings 5. Inferior vena cava filters in very few patients.

## **6. What is Anticoagulation therapy?**

Anticoagulants decrease the clotting ability of the blood and therefore help to prevent harmful clots forming in the blood vessels or if they are already formed, prevent them from traveling to lungs. Initially treated with injections and then changed over to pills.

## **7. When and how do I take medication?**

- Take your medications exactly as prescribed. Preferably during night times.
- It is important to take these medicines at appropriately same time everyday (Eg: 5pm/ 6pm)
- Stick to regular dosing of the medicine. Do not miss the dose. If you miss a dose take it as soon as possible and next day go back to the same dosing schedule.
- Do not take an extra pill to catch upon a missed dose.
- Do not stop medicines without doctor's advice

## **8. How long is the treatment ?**

Treatment is normally given for 6 months to 1 year. In few conditions, if you have deficiency of few factors, it is for a longer period, which will be advised by JIVAS doctors.

## **9. What are the blood tests required while on anti coagulation?**

Blood test required is called Prothrombin Time/INR. Blood tests are done to adjust the dosage of the anticoagulant required for you.

## **10. What should be my INR value ?**

Normal value is 1.0. On blood thinners it should be between 2 and 3. Changes in your dose are determined by your INR value. This can be done by visiting JIVAS or over the telephone through JIVAS 24 hour "hotline" 9880600725.

## **11. How frequently should I test for INR?**

One has to monitor Prothrombin Time & INR several times initially as and when advised by the doctor. It should be done once in every 4 to 6 weeks while on treatment and 7-10 days after any change in the dosage of tablets.

## 12. Why should I have such frequent INR tests?

Many things such as diet, alcohol, health and medications can affect INR quickly. If your INR drops too low, clots may form and if your INR is too high, you have risk of increased bleeding. So it's important to monitor INR regularly.

## 13. What specific things can affect my INR?



**a) Diet:** High amount of Vitamin K can decrease your INR. Vitamin K works against Anticoagulation therapy. Foods rich in Vitamin K are Dark green leafy vegetables (spinach etc) cabbage, cauliflower, Oats, Peas, Ground nuts, Soya bean, Wheat bran, capsicum, garlic, Liver, Asafoetida. But you can eat them after boiling and straining the water. Ask your doctor before taking any nutritional supplements or vitamin tablets.

**b) Health:** If you have a fever over 101.0F or nausea, vomiting or diarrhea for more than two days, this can increase your INR.

**c) Alcohol:** Alcohol interacts with your liver. These medications are cleared out of your body by liver. If you drink excess of alcohol your INR may increase and cause bleeding. Don't drink alcohol on a daily basis or more than two drinks at any one time

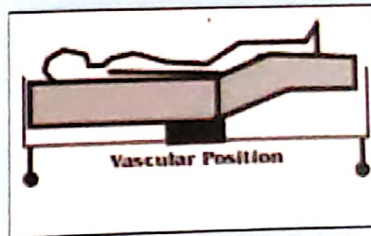
**d) Other Herbal/Alternative medications:** Many herbal medicines have been shown to interact with these medicines.

## 14. Can medicines interact with Anticoagulation?

Many medications can interfere with INR/PT values. It is very important to inform your health care professionals (Medical doctors, dentists, Pharmacists) about you taking anticoagulants.

### 15. Is it important to elevate the legs?

Yes. To reduce the swelling one has to keep the leg elevated while sitting or sleeping, with the help of pillows. Elevation has to be above the level of heart.



### 16. What is compression? How do I use it?

- Compression is to prevent or reduce swelling. Stockings/crepe bandage are used for compression.
- Elastic compression stockings should be worn as soon as you wake up in the morning, used throughout the day and removed at night before going to sleep.
- Stockings should be worn during routine activities.
- These stockings will also prevent long term complications like wounds over the legs, darkening of the skin because of DVT.
- Stockings are very important part of your treatment.
- Preferably tight compression Stockings are worn for 3-4 years. & has to be changed every 6 months/ when they are torn.
- These are specialized stockings and not usually available in stores. You need prescription for specific type of stockings.



### 17. Can I become pregnant when I am on anticoagulation?

No. Do not become pregnant while you are on anticoagulation, if so report to your doctor immediately. If you are planning for pregnancy you



have to be off anticoagulation for at least 2-3 months under the guidance of your doctor. These medications may cause birth defects and severe bleeding in the fetus during 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of pregnancy.

### **18. Can I breast feed my baby postpartum?**

Yes. If you are on selective anticoagulants you can breast feed your baby. Consult your Pediatrician about giving Vitamin K drops to the kid. If your baby passes blood in urine report to the doctor immediately, then you may need to stop anticoagulants.

### **19. What contraceptive measures are to be taken while on Anticoagulation?**

Stop Oral contraceptive pills if you are taking any. Use any other form of contraceptive measures. For details contact your gynecologist.

### **20. When do I need to see the doctor?**

Regular follow up with the doctor along with PT/INR reports is necessary. Also immediately report if you have any unusual signs of bleeding.

#### **Signs of unusual bleeding:**

- Bleeding from Gums while brushing teeth.
- Blood in urine, nose bleeds.
- Red spots on skin, unusual bruising from cuts/wounds.
- Heavy unexpected menstrual bleeding, dark brown colored urine.
- Black colored/Blood in Stools.
- Continuous stomach upset/pain, diarrhea, fever ( $>100$  F).
- Chest pain shortness of breath, sudden weakness, if you have met with head injury. or any other injury.
- Feeling faint/ weak.
- Report to doctors of any falls / blows to the body or head or other injuries.



It is important that you carry identification card stating that you are using this medicine.

### **21. How will I avoid injury?**

It is important to use safety measures while at home and while traveling.

## **22. May I travel when taking anticoagulants?**

Traveling is fine while you are on anticoagulation with compression stockings. Avoid long distance traveling at the time of diagnosis.

## **23. What other medical problems may affect the use of Anticoagulants?**

Other medical problems can affect anticoagulation therapy. Hence Inform your doctors if you have allergic reactions to any anticoagulants or other drugs/substances. Conditions like Thrombophilia, Polycythemia Vera (High blood cell count), Leukemia and other cancers of internal organs, Diabetes mellitus, Hypertension Stomach ulcers, Tuberculosis, Diverticulitis, Hemorrhoids , Pregnancy, liver disease have to be reported to your doctor.

If your problem occurs at night and you feel that you cannot wait until the morning, call JIVAS hotline phone number- 9880600725

Please ask any questions or relate any problem to any member of the JIVAS team, we will try to answer them.

If you move out of the state/country please inform the doctor.

Remember that the disease can be easily controlled if you follow these easy instructions carefully.

**We wish you a speedy recovery.**