

Information if you have a suspected DVT (deep vein thrombosis) and need an ultrasound scan

Accident and emergency

Patient information

Why have I been given this information?

You have been referred by the Emergency Department (ED) for an urgent ultrasound assessment (scan) on your leg.

You have been referred because the doctors at the Emergency Department are concerned that you could have a deep vein thrombosis (blood clot) in your leg.

This information tells you what will happen to you, and what you need to be aware of to keep you safe.

What is a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and why might it be dangerous?

A DVT is when a blood clot forms in a deep vein, usually in the leg.

In a small number of people who have a DVT, a part of the blood clot breaks off. This travels in the bloodstream and can get stuck in a blood vessel going to a lung. This is called a pulmonary embolus.

A pulmonary embolism a serious, potentially life-threatening condition. If you experience any of the symptoms listed below, call 999:

- new or worsening shortness of breath
- chest pain with breathing
- coughing up blood.

Why do I need to have an ultrasound assessment (scan)?

An ultrasound assessment will let doctors see if you have a blood clot in your vein. It will help them to decide how to treat it safely.

It is very important that you attend this appointment.

When will I have my ultrasound appointment?

You will be contacted by the ultrasound department with an appointment time. We aim to organise this within the next three days.

After your scan, you will be contacted by the ambulatory care clinic to discuss the results of the scan.

If you have not heard anything after 48 hours, please contact:

Princess Royal Hospital patients:

Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) department:

01444 441881

Royal Sussex County Hospital patients:

Acute Medical Unit: 01273 696955 Ext 67780

What medicine will I be given while I am waiting for my scan?

You should have been given anticoagulation (blood thinning) medicine by the Emergency Department doctor. This is to treat the potential DVT while we wait for the scan.

We will give you enough of this medicine to last you five days. This should cover the time between your visit to ED and your scan.

If for any reason the scan is arranged later than three days, it is very important you get some more of this medicine. You can get this either from your GP or the ED to cover you until the scan.

While you are taking this medicine, you have a higher risk of bleeding. If you get an injury (particularly head injuries), you will need to be seen urgently by a doctor.

Who can I contact if I need advice or support before I have my ultrasound scan?

Please contact:

Princess Royal Hospital patients:

Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) department

01444 441881

Royal Sussex County Hospital patients:

Acute Medical Unit

01273 696955 Ext. 67780

If you are concerned, or feel unwell, dial 999 or come back to the Emergency Department.

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This information is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath.

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