

VTE Venous Thrombo Embolism

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VTE stands for Venous Thrombo Embolism which is the clinical term for a blood clot. This pamphlet explains the risk of blood clots for people taking the combined oral contraceptive pill.

Taking the combined oral contraceptive pill slightly increases your risk of getting a blood clot in your veins. There are different kinds of blood clot.

- A clot in the veins in your leg causes pain and swelling in your leg. This is a deep vein thrombosis (DVT).
- A clot in your lungs can cause a sharp pain in your chest, shortness of breath, make your heart beat faster and sometimes you might cough up blood. This is a pulmonary embolism (PE).

You need to see a doctor immediately if you have any of these symptoms.

Of **10,000 people aged 15 to 44**, the chart below shows the number who will get a blood clot in one year.

Situation	10,000 people
Not pregnant and not on the contraceptive pill	2 people out of 10,000
Taking a pill containing Levonorgestrel or Norethisterone.	5 to 7 people out of 10,000
Taking a pill containing Desogestrel, Drospirinone or Cyproterone Acetate	9 to 12 people out of 10,000
Pregnant or a few weeks after delivery	over 20 people out of 10,000

Being still for a long period of time increases your risk of blood clots. On long trips, for example on an international flight, try to walk every few hours and drink plenty of water.

If you are having major surgery or can't move much due to an illness or injury, tell the doctor or health provider who is looking after you that you are on the pill.

If a close family member gets a blood clot, tell your doctor or health provider as this may increase your chance of a blood clot.