

My flying after a blood clot clearance questions

Questions about your clot and treatment, your trip and your health background to answer before your visit and take to the clinician treating your clot. Write your answers on the lines. This sheet stays with you; nothing is sent anywhere.

Safety first. Call 911 for severe chest pain or pressure, severe shortness of breath, suddenly not being able to speak, see, walk or move, or suddenly being weak or drooping on one side of the body. Difficulty breathing, a faster than normal or irregular heartbeat, chest pain or discomfort that gets worse with a deep breath or coughing, coughing up blood, or lightheadedness or fainting can be signs of a blood clot in the lungs (pulmonary embolism); CDC says to seek medical help immediately. Do not wait for a routine callback from your provider: go to an emergency department or call 911 or your local emergency number for help. New or worsening swelling of a leg, pain or tenderness you cannot explain, skin that is warm to the touch, or redness or discoloration of the skin can be signs of a blood clot in a deep vein (deep vein thrombosis); CDC says to contact your doctor as soon as possible. These steps apply before, during and after a trip; if signs start while you are away, use the local emergency number where you are. If you take a blood thinner, do not stop, skip or change it for a trip on your own; CDC says to follow your doctor's recommendations on medication use. This sheet is general education. It cannot tell you whether or when you can fly; only the clinician treating your clot can decide that.

About my clot and treatment

1. When was my clot diagnosed, and which vein was it in?

2. Was the clot only in my leg, or was there also a clot in my lungs?

3. Do I still have swelling, pain or other symptoms in that leg, and are they getting better or worse?

4. Which blood thinner am I taking, when did I start it, and how long am I expected to take it?

5. Have I missed any doses, or has my medicine changed recently?

6. Have I had a blood clot before, or does anyone in my family have a history of clots or a clotting disorder?

About the trip

7. When do I plan to travel, and how long is each flight or leg of the journey?

8. Will part of the trip be a long car, bus or train ride?

9. Will I be able to get up and move around during the journey?

10. Is the trip urgent, or could the date move if needed?

11. Where am I going, and how would I get medical care there?

12. Does my airline ask for a medical certificate or form?

Other things that can raise my clot risk

13. Have I recently had surgery, an injury or a hospital stay?

14. Am I pregnant, or have I given birth in the last 3 months?

15. Do I use estrogen-containing birth control or hormone replacement therapy?

16. Do I have active cancer or recent cancer treatment, a heart or lung condition, or diabetes?

Questions to ask the clinician treating my clot

17. Is my condition stable enough for this trip, and when would you be comfortable with me flying?

18. Do I need a check-up or any test before I go?

19. Should I take any extra steps for this trip, such as compression stockings or other prevention, or none?

20. How should I take my blood thinner on travel days and across time zones, and what should I do if I miss a dose?

21. Can you complete a medical certificate for the airline if it asks for one?

22. Which signs during or after the trip mean I should get emergency care, and which mean I should call you?

Bring to your appointment

- This sheet with your answers
- A list of every medicine and supplement you take, with the times you take them
- Your travel dates, flight lengths and destination
- Any airline medical form or certificate you have been asked to complete
- Reports from your clot diagnosis, such as ultrasound results, if you have them

My notes

Sources

MedlinePlus: When to use the emergency room; Deep vein thrombosis; Deep vein thrombosis - discharge (medlineplus.gov). CDC: Understanding your risk for blood clots with travel; CDC Yellow Book 2026: Deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism (cdc.gov). NHLBI: Venous thromboembolism; Treatment; Causes and risk factors; Preventing blood clots (nhlbi.nih.gov). BTS Clinical Statement on air travel for passengers with respiratory disease (Thorax, 2022); Vascular Medicine patient information page for newly diagnosed DVT or PE (2023); ASH 2018 VTE prophylaxis guidelines (Blood Advances); Aerospace Medical Association: Fitness to fly and medical clearances (2014). The clinician treating your clot decides whether and when you can fly.

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