

Deep vein thrombosis

AND PULMONARY EMBOLISM

DVT= deep vein thrombosis

PE= pulmonary embolism

Deep vein thrombosis occurs when blood clots form in deep leg veins, break off, travel through the heart and lodge in the pulmonary artery.

There are three varieties of veins:

Superficial - Collects blood from surface of the skin.

Communicating - Acts as connection between superficial and deep veins.

Deep - Large vein, deep within muscles that transports blood back to the heart.

Veins return blood containing wastes from the body to the heart.

Claplike valves in deep veins prevent the back-flow of blood. These are needed because of gravity and the low pressure of returning blood.

Clots or thrombosis are caused by:

- Slow blood flow
- Imbalance in clotting materials
- Defect in vein walls

A clot begins when platelets begin adhering to vein walls. This is known as a thrombosis and usually occurs around the valves.

The thrombosis may remain stationary and cause a condition called stasis.

A piece of the thrombosis can break away (embolism) and travel through the bloodstream to the heart.

