

# Are you at risk of getting a blood clot?

Information for **medical** patients



**If you are recovering from illness by extended hospital or bed rest, you are more likely to get a blood clot.**

Read this booklet and discuss your risk of developing a blood clot with your healthcare professional.



## WHAT IS A BLOOD CLOT?

A blood clot is a group of blood cells that stick together. Most of the time this is helpful because it stops us bleeding. But sometimes blood clots can be dangerous. Blood clots are dangerous when they stop blood flowing through the body. When this happens they can cause damage and can even cause death.

This booklet will help you to talk to your healthcare professional about your risk of developing a blood clot. This booklet contains information about what you can do if you are at risk of a blood clot. Talk to your doctor or nurse if you are worried about your risk.

For more information, you can visit  
[www.vtematters.co.nz](http://www.vtematters.co.nz)

## ARE YOU AT RISK?

You are more at risk of a blood clot if you are recovering from illness by extended resting. You may be resting in a hospital bed or at home. You are also more at risk of blood clots if you:



Are obese



Are of older age



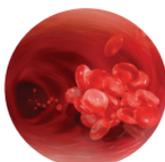
Have low levels of activity or movement



Have cancer



Have had a blood clot before



Have a blood clotting problem



Hospitalisation for illness or surgery



Have heart problems such as heart failure

If any of these describe you, talk to your specialist, doctor or nurse about what you can do to reduce your risk. Keep reading the rest of this booklet for tips on reducing your risk.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to remember that blood clots can happen to anyone. But you are more at risk if you are on extended bed rest, and you have some of the other risk factors listed above.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO REDUCE YOUR RISK?

There are many things you can do to reduce your risk. Some of these are listed below. You can also ask your specialist, doctor or nurse to talk to you about what you can do.<sup>2</sup>

### The following activities can help improve your blood flow and reduce your risk:



Drink plenty of water (talk to your doctor about the right amount of water for you)



Try to get up and move around regularly (talk to your doctor about the right amount of movement for you)



Foot exercises such as wiggling your toes can help when you are resting or sitting

There are also medications available that can help prevent blood clots. One of these medications is called Clexane.

All medications have risks and benefits. Your doctor will decide if the benefits of you taking Clexane are greater than the risks of you taking Clexane.

## CLEXANE CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK OF BLOOD CLOTS

Clexane is an injectable medication that can help to prevent blood clots. It is a medication that can be given at home. Talk to your doctor if you think you may have an increased risk of developing a blood clot.

## TALKING WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

It's natural to have questions about your healthcare. Your healthcare team are there for you, to answer your questions. Use the space below to write down questions to ask your specialist, doctor or nurse:

Question 1: *Am I at risk of getting a blood clot?*

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Question 2: *Is Clexane right for me?*

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Question 3: \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 4: \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 5: \_\_\_\_\_

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## USEFUL MEDICAL TERMS

Here is a list of some terms that your doctor or nurse may use when talking to you about Clexane:

- **Antithrombotic or Anticoagulant**  
A substance or medicine that can prevent or treat a blood clot.
- **Clexane**  
A type of medicine also known as a 'Low Molecular Weight Heparin' (or LMWH for short). Clexane is given by injection to help prevent or treat a blood clot.
- **Heparin/LMWH**  
An anticoagulant given by injection to help prevent or treat a blood clot.
- **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)**  
A blood clot that forms in a vein in the leg.
- **Thrombus**  
A blood clot that forms in a vein.
- **Embolism**  
A blood clot that travels through the blood stream, gets stuck and blocks an artery.
- **Pulmonary Embolism (PE)**  
A blockage of a blood vessel in the lung by a clot.
- **Superficial thrombosis**  
A blood clot that forms in a vein near the skin.
- **Ultrasound machine**  
A medical device that uses sound waves to detect a blood clot.
- **Venography**  
An x-ray technique that shows veins in the legs and can detect a blood clot.

## CONSUMER INFORMATION

### CLEXANE® and CLEXANE® FORTE (enoxaparin sodium)

Clexane is a Prescription Medicine for the treatment of blood clots and certain types of heart disease (angina & heart attacks) when used with aspirin. It is also used to prevent blood clots forming after an operation, during hospitalisation or during haemodialysis.

Do not use if allergic to Clexane, heparin, other LMWHs or any of its ingredients. Do not use Clexane if you have a major blood disorder, stomach or bowel problems such as ulcers, bacterial infections in your heart, or certain types of stroke.

**Precautions:** Pregnancy and breastfeeding, kidney or liver disease (discuss with your doctor).

Tell your doctor if you are planning on having a spinal or epidural injection.

Clexane is given by an injection under the skin or into the tubing of the dialysis machine. Do not rub the injection site after administration.

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including those you can get from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop. Interactions with other medicine may interfere with Clexane.

**Side Effects:** Tell your doctor immediately if you notice bleeding, pain, bruising or irritation at the injection site, itchy red rash or hard lumps at the injection site, difficulty in breathing, abdominal or chest pain, headache. Whilst rare, if you have pain in the middle of your back, numbness in your legs, or a fine widespread rash you may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.

Contains enoxaparin sodium 100mg/mL, 150mg/mL.

Clexane has risks and benefits. Ask your doctor if CLEXANE is right for you. Use strictly as directed and if symptoms continue or you have side effects see your doctor, pharmacist or healthcare professional.

**MEDICINE CLASSIFICATION:** PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE. CLEXANE IS FULLY REIMBURSED FOR PATIENTS THAT MEET SPECIAL CRITERIA OUTLINED IN THE COMMUNITY PHARMACEUTICAL SCHEDULE, SA1646. FOR ALL OTHER PATIENTS CLEXANE IS UNFUNDED. PHARMACY CHARGES AND DOCTORS FEES APPLY TO ALL PRESCRIPTIONS.

For further information please refer to the CLEXANE Consumer Medicine Information on the Medsafe website: (<https://medsafe.govt.nz/consumers/cmi/c/clexane.pdf>). Date of Preparation May 2018.

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## REFERENCES

1. Clexane® and Clexane® Forte Approved Data Sheet June 2017.
2. Blood Clot Alliance: Stop the Clot  
[https://www.stoptheclot.org/learn\\_more/dvt/](https://www.stoptheclot.org/learn_more/dvt/)

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For more information please visit:  
[www.vtematters.co.nz](http://www.vtematters.co.nz)

