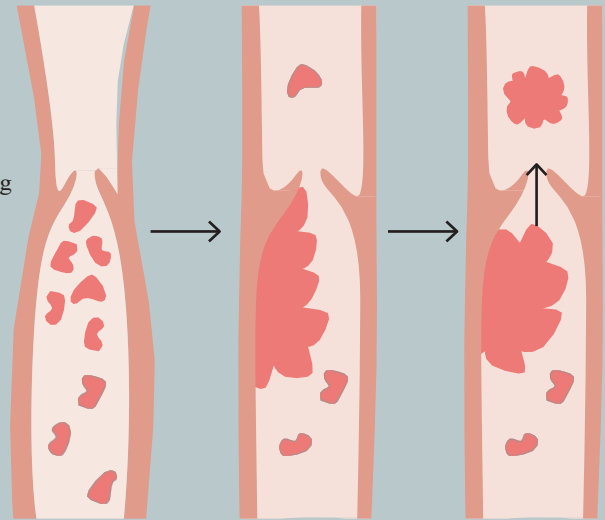


How to protect your care patients from thrombosis

Thrombosis, especially in older people, often goes unnoticed but can be life-threatening. Thrombosis occurs when a blood clot (thrombus) forms in a blood vessel, usually in a vein in the leg. This clot partially or completely blocks the vessel, preventing blood from flowing properly.

Why is this dangerous?

The clot can break loose and travel with the bloodstream, for example, into the lungs. There, it can cause a life-threatening pulmonary embolism.



Examples of people who are particularly at risk of thrombosis

Physical immobility

- Care patients who lie or sit a lot (e.g. bedridden or in a wheelchair)
- Prolonged immobilisation After surgery (e.g. hip or knee surgery)
- General lack of exercise (including lack of motivation or depression)



Acute or chronic illnesses

- Heart failure (cardiac insufficiency)
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Coagulation disorders (congenital or acquired)
- Varicose veins (varicosis)
- Severe infections or inflammation



Medications with a risk of thrombosis

- Cortisone preparations
- Hormone preparations (e.g. hormone replacement therapy)
- cytostatics and other medications used in cancer treatment



Lifestyle and external factors

- Fluid deficiency (dehydration)
- Smoking
- Overweight (obesity)
- Advanced age (especially over 65)
- Prolonged sitting or travelling without exercise (e.g. bus, plane)



The more of these factors a care recipient has, the higher their risk of thrombosis.



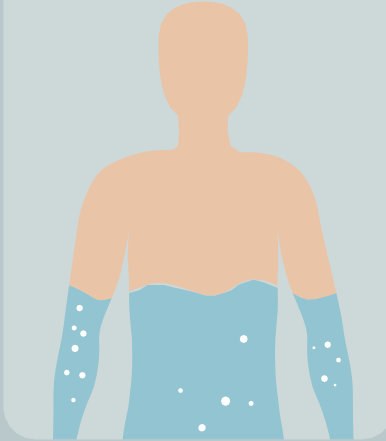


Why you should pay particular attention

The muscle pump, especially in the calves, plays a decisive role in blood flow. Bed rest, surgery or prolonged sitting can easily lead to blood congestion, increasing the risk of thrombosis.



Dehydration due to insufficient fluid intake or fever makes the blood thicker and increases its tendency to clot.



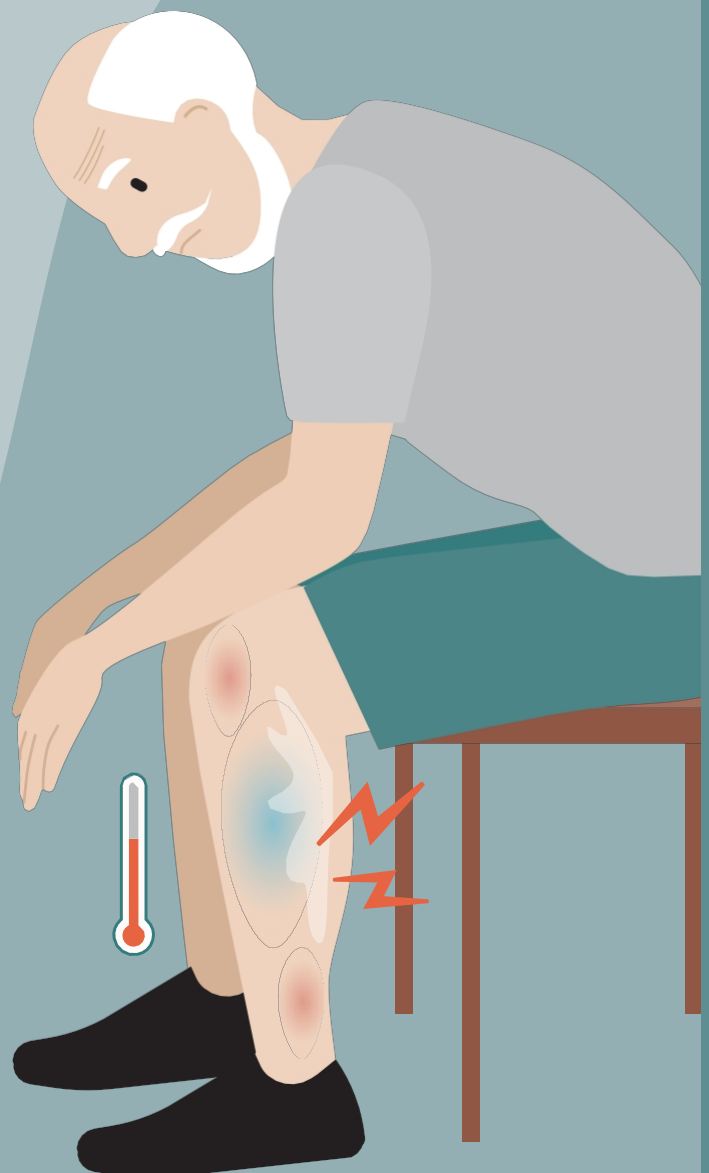
Injuries or diseases of the vessel wall (e.g. arteriosclerosis, phlebitis) are common triggers. Combined risks – e.g. after surgery and simultaneous prolonged lying down – significantly increase the risk.



These are the typical signs of thrombosis:

- Swelling: Usually only in one leg. Sudden, especially in the calf or thigh
- Pain or feeling of tension: Often in the calf, similar to muscle soreness. Pain worsens when walking or standing
- Overheating of the affected area: The leg feels warmer than the other
- Redness or bluish discolouration of the skin: The skin may appear shiny or discoloured
- Pressure sensitivity: Especially when pressing on the calf or the sole of the foot
- Heaviness or tension: The leg feels heavy or "swollen"

Please note: Not everyone has all of these symptoms. In older people or those requiring care, the signs are often non-specific or less pronounced – sometimes all it takes is a vague feeling of discomfort in the leg or sudden inner restlessness.





When you should take action

If you suspect thrombosis, seek medical attention immediately!

Untreated thrombosis can cause a life-threatening pulmonary embolism. Therefore, inform a nurse or your doctor **immediately**.



Warning signs of a pulmonary embolism

Sudden shortness of breath:

- Often the first warning sign
- Usually occurs without prior exertion



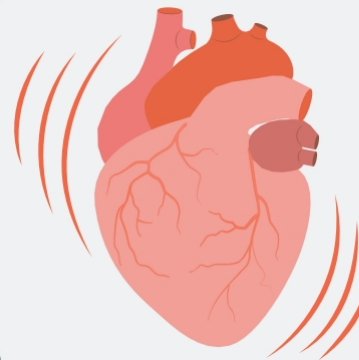
Chest pain

- Pain in the chest
- Worsens when breathing in (breath-dependent)



Dry cough, possibly with bloody sputum

- Indicates Lung-accompanying Tachycardia

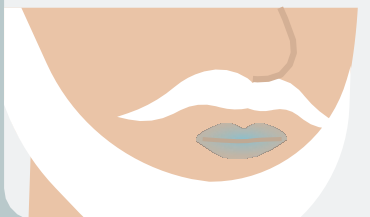


Tachycardia (rapid pulse)

- Often over 100 beats per minute
- Heart races even at rest

Blue discolouration of the lips or fingernails (cyanosis)

- Signs of oxygen substance deficiency



Cold, clammy skin

- Often accompanied by anxiety or panic



Collapse or loss of consciousness

- In the case of large embolisms with circulatory failure



If you notice any of these warning signs, call **the emergency services immediately on 112** and raise the upper body of the affected person.



Thrombosis prevention: What you can do as a caregiver

Thrombosis prevention is particularly important for bedridden, immobile or recently operated care patients. The aim is to promote blood circulation and reduce risks.

Here's what you can do:

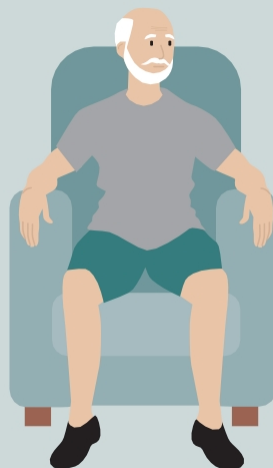
Encourage movement: early mobilisation, repositioning, walking attempts, movement exercises in bed (e.g. foot circles, toe curls).



Instruct breathing exercises: Deep abdominal breathing helps to improve venous return.



Keep an eye on risk factors: e.g. lack of exercise, dehydration.



Thrombosis stockings: Put on medically prescribed thrombosis stockings correctly and check them daily for fit and skin reactions.



Encourage regular fluid intake (unless contraindicated).



Take warning signs seriously and inform a nurse immediately if you notice: unilateral leg swelling, pain or tension in the calf, bluish discoloration or overheating.



Conclusion: Even small nursing measures such as exercise, paying attention to fluid intake or careful observation can have a big impact and contribute significantly to the safety of your care recipients.

