



Royal Berkshire  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Coming to the DVT Clinic at the Royal Berkshire Hospital

Information for patients

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**This leaflet explains what to expect on your first visit to the DVT Clinic at the RBH. If there is anything you don't understand or if you have a question or concern, please ask a member of the team – they will be happy to help.**

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## **What is a Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)?**

A DVT is a blood clot that forms in a deep vein, usually in the leg. Veins are the blood vessels that take blood towards your heart.

A DVT is a blood clot that partly or completely blocks the deep leg veins that go through the muscles of your calf and thigh.

## **Information about the DVT Clinic**

This is an outpatient service for the diagnosis and treatment of DVT. It is based in the SDEC (Same Day Emergency Care Unit), which is on level 1 in Centre Block at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

You are likely to have been referred to the clinic by your GP. Your GP will arrange an appointment time and give you a letter, which you should give to the receptionist on arrival.

Please allow 2 hours for assessment and tests. If you are found to have a DVT, you will need to stay longer (possibly up to 3 hours).

Please wear appropriate, loose fitting clothing that can be easily removed for examination of your legs and the ultrasound that may follow. This will ensure that we can provide a more efficient service.

For patients not able to walk, the nurses will assist you to change into a hospital gown for the assessment and will help you dress after the scan.

## **What should I expect?**

- **Nursing assessment:** You will be seen by a specialist nurse, who will assess you to find out whether you are likely to have a DVT. This includes examining your legs and asking about your symptoms and medical history.

- **Blood test:** You may have a blood test (known as a D-dimer test). This involves taking some blood from a vein in your arm. This test helps us to calculate your risk of having a DVT.
- For some patients, a negative result from this blood test may mean that you are unlikely to have a DVT and your symptoms, such as pain or swelling, are likely to be caused by something else. You may be advised to go back and see your GP.
- If the result is positive, it means that you may have a DVT, but not that you definitely do. A positive result can be caused by other things, such as infection or inflammation. The specialist nurse will explain your blood test results to you.
- **Ultrasound scan:** If a DVT cannot be ruled out with a blood test, you will have an ultrasound scan. Usually only the upper part of your leg is scanned (behind your knee and thigh), even if your symptoms are in your lower leg. This is because clots extending above the knee are the important ones that must be treated. The symptoms you have in your lower leg may be there because of a clot in your upper leg.
- If your ultrasound scan shows that you do not have a DVT in your upper leg, you may need to come back after 1 week for a second scan. This will all be explained to you by the specialist nurse.

## **What happens if I can't get a scan on the day I'm referred?**

You will usually have a diagnosis on the day that you are referred, but if you are referred in the afternoon, you may not be able to have an ultrasound scan until the following day.

If this happens, you may be given an anticoagulant as either a tablet or an injection. Anticoagulants are used in the treatment of a DVT, to increase the length of time it takes your blood to clot. You will be given this medication before your first scan, in case you do have a DVT. Alternatively, you may be given it by your GP or in the Emergency Department (A&E), before you come to the DVT Clinic.

## **What happens if I am diagnosed with a DVT?**

If a DVT is confirmed, the specialist nurse will start you on treatment.

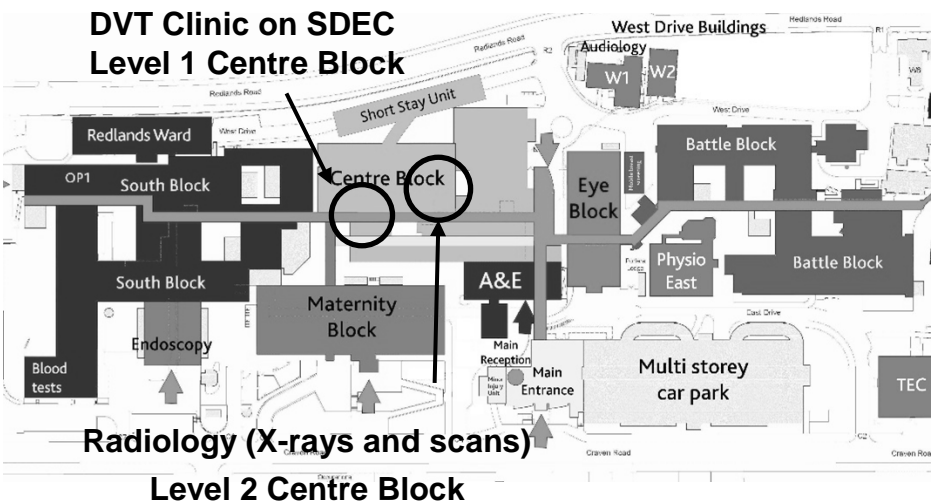
## How to contact us

If you have questions or concerns, please contact us. DVT Clinic, SDEC / SSU, Level 1 Centre Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital, Tel 0118 322 7494 Monday to Friday 8am-4pm.

## Getting to the DVT Clinic

The clinic is based inside the Same Day Emergency Care Unit (SDEC) on level 1 Centre Block.

After the main reception desk on level 2, walk past the shops and take the second left after the Welcome Desk. Use the lift or stairs down to level 1 and turn right down the main corridor, past the X-ray department and towards the hospital restaurant. SDEC and the DVT Clinic are on the left, opposite AMU.



To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

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