

# Pulmonary Embolism

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A Pulmonary Embolism occurs when one of the pulmonary arteries in the lung becomes blocked by a blood clot.<sup>[i]</sup> A common cause of pulmonary embolisms is **deep vein thrombosis**. Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when a blood clot forms in a deep vein in another part of the body, usually the leg, breaks free and then moves through the bloodstream to the lungs.<sup>[ii]</sup> If a clot develops in the vein and it stays there, it is called a **thrombus**. If the clot detaches from the wall of the vein and travels to another part of the body, it is called an **embolus**.<sup>[iii]</sup> A Pulmonary Embolism can restrict blood flow to the lungs, increase blood pressure in the pulmonary arteries, and make it difficult for the lungs to supply oxygen to the body. DVT and Pulmonary Embolism many times can be prevented with the appropriate prophylactic measures including compression devices and anticoagulation medications. Pulmonary Embolism can be life-threatening if not properly diagnosed and treated.

Certain patients are known to be at a higher risk for the development of DVT and Pulmonary Embolism including patients whose mobility is limited such as with extended bed rest due to a medical condition or following surgery.

Obese patients are at higher risk as are patients with a history of clots, clotting disorders, high blood pressure or COPD. Cigarettes and certain medications such as birth control also increase the risk.

The symptoms of DVT include cramps or pain in the calf, swelling of the leg, red or darkened skin in the leg or swollen veins in the leg. The symptoms of Pulmonary Embolism include shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness or fainting, irregular heartbeat, sweating and low blood pressure. It is critical that physicians and nurses closely monitor high-risk patients for these symptoms.

Once there is a suspicion of DVT or Pulmonary Embolism, the condition can be detected by a Chest X-ray, Computed Tomography Scan (CT), V/Q lung scan, blood tests, Pulmonary Angiogram, EKG, ultrasound of the leg, or Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the legs or lungs.

Early diagnosis and treatment are essential. Treatment of DVT and/or Pulmonary Embolism includes Anticoagulation, Fibrinolytic Therapy, Pulmonary Embolectomy, Percutaneous Thrombectomy, or a Vena Cava Filter.

Because certain patients are known to be at a higher risk for development of DVT or Pulmonary Embolism, it is critical that physicians and nurses be aware of these risks, take steps to prevent the development of DVT and/or Pulmonary Embolism, closely monitor the patient for the symptoms of DVT and/or Pulmonary Embolism, and, if they occur, to make the diagnosis as early as possible so that life-saving treatment can be given.

The risks associated with DVT and Pulmonary Embolism are well-known. The failure of a hospital, its physicians and its nurses to take steps to prevent, to monitor and to timely diagnose and treat DVT and/or Pulmonary Embolism constitutes negligence.

If you or a family member have suffered from a DVT or Pulmonary Embolism that should have been prevented or that was not properly diagnosed and treated, you may be entitled to compensation for your damages. Please contact Bonner Law at [305-676-8800](tel:305-676-8800) for a free consultation. We have over 30 years of experience representing patients and healthcare providers in medical malpractice litigation.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/pulmonary-embolus>

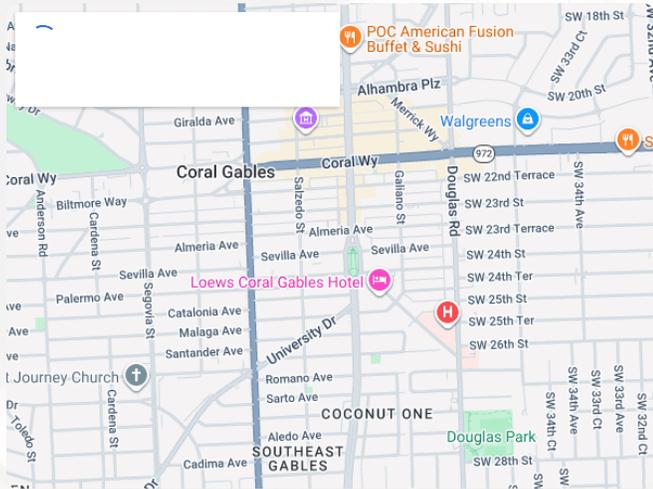
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pulmonary-embolism/symptoms-causes/syc-20354647>

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