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Drug may help sickest patients

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Patients in critical care have a larger risk for dangerous blood clots because they are immobile and usually have heart or breathing problems. However, an international study by McMaster University researchers has found promise in a lower dose formula of the blood-thinning drug dalteparin.

The Prophylaxis for [Thromboembolism](#) in Critical Care Trial (PROTECT) study has found the drug, which had been believed to be too risky for nearly 20 years, significantly improves the patient's ability to avoid pulmonary blood clots and did not show an increased risk of bleeding or death. The study was led by Deborah Cook, a professor of medicine and [clinical epidemiology](#) and biostatistics at the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine at McMaster.

The four-year study, published in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) last month, involved more than 3,760 patients in 64 hospitals in six countries, including St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton. The McMaster team of eight faculty and staff worked with others in Australia, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, the United Kingdom and the U.S. The study was funded by the Canadian Institute for Health Research, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and other research foundations.

"Global trials are the way of the future for answering questions about everyday practice," said Cook. "Collaborations like this can help us to decrease the morbidity and mortality of the most seriously ill hospitalized patients in the [intensive care unit](#)."

Provided by McMaster University

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