

## Many not aware of thrombosis, A deadly cardiovascular foe

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Judy Kleinmann injured her hip after a motorcycle accident 12 years ago. She worked as a landscaper and later at a greenhouse before the pain made a more sedentary job in a physician's office much more attractive.

Trouble with her hip continued for years before she came to University of Cincinnati Medical Center's emergency room last May when the pain became unbearable.

"The nurse was concerned because my blood pressure was a little high although I attributed it to nerves and being a little anxious," says Mrs. Kleinmann, 56, of Cincinnati. "Then they checked my oxygen levels and those were kind of low and that's why they did a chest X-ray and a CT scan, and they became aware that I had a blood clot in the lower lobe of the right lung."

She was placed on blood thinner and spent three days in the hospital. Mrs. Kleinmann returned home, but came back for hip surgery in December 2014. She was taken off blood thinners for the surgery and again trouble with a blood clot returned.

Doctors were able to correct the problem, but the occurrences made Mrs. Kleinmann much more aware of a cardiovascular foe that can be as deadly as stroke or heart attack, but isn't nearly as well known.

Raising awareness of the dangers of venous thromboembolism is the

goal of this year's international observance of World Thrombosis Day set for Oct. 13. About 10 million people worldwide, including 600,000 Americans, annually suffer from [venous thromboembolism](#), explains Richard Becker, MD, director and physician-in-chief of the UC Heart, Lung and Vascular Institute.

It's a condition that includes the formation of a blood clot in a deep vein typically in the leg or pelvic veins (deep vein thrombosis) and pulmonary embolism which results if a clot dislodges and travels to the lungs, says Becker.

"If not diagnosed rapidly and treated effectively the outcome can be life altering or even life-threatening," says Becker, a UC Health cardiologist with advanced training and experience with blood clotting disorders and diseases. "While some people have inherited or acquired conditions, including undiagnosed cancer that are predisposing factors for developing [blood clots](#), the most common risk factor is being hospitalized for a serious medical condition, surgery or following a [motor vehicle accident](#). In these settings, preventive measures are undertaken that can effectively lower the risk."

The Centers for Disease Control offers some suggestions for preventing thrombosis.

- Move around as soon as possible after having been confined to bed, such as after surgery, illness, or injury.
- If you're at risk for [deep vein thrombosis](#) talk to your doctor about the use of graduated compression stockings and possible medications (anticoagulants) as preventive measures.
- When sitting for long periods of time or traveling for more than four hours get up and walk every two to three hours.
- You can reduce your risk by maintaining a healthy weight, avoiding a sedentary lifestyle and following your doctor's

recommendations based on your individual risk factors.

- Mrs. Kleinmann says staying active is now among her best defenses against thrombosis.

"I have always loved gardening and my garden has gone neglected for several years mostly because of the hip problem, but I am back at that," says Mrs. Kleinmann. "I do still have some shortness of breath now and then, but I have kind of learned to take good deep breaths and keep moving. When you own a home there is always something that needs to be done. Most of my time off, and energy is now used catching up on things I didn't get done for years, such as painting, gardening and things like that."

Provided by University of Cincinnati

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