



**For Immediate Release**

**March is DVT Awareness Month  
2 million Americans suffer from blood clots every year**

February 29, 2012 (South Portland, ME) – More Americans die of DVT and PE each year than die from breast cancer, AIDS and automobile accidents combined [1]. But what is it and why is it so dangerous?

According to [vein specialist](#) Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen of the Vein Healthcare Center, [deep vein thrombosis](#) (DVT), is a blood clot in the deep vein system. The danger of DVT is that the clot could break free from the vein wall and enter into the blood stream. The clot could then travel to the lungs and become a PE (pulmonary embolism), or to the brain and result in a stroke. DVT-related PE is the leading cause of preventable death in U.S. hospitals.

**Who's at risk?** Many factors contribute to DVT risk, including age, inherited blood clotting disorders, certain medications, or vein injuries. Sitting in a confined space or traveling for long periods can also increase the risk of DVT. There are a number of risk assessment quizzes available online.

**What are the symptoms?** In most cases, the affected area— usually in the leg— will be painful, swollen or tender, with a redness or discoloration of the skin. Even a muscle cramp that feels especially sharp and painful can be an indication of DVT. DVT is a medical emergency, so any symptoms should be regarded as a DVT until proven otherwise, especially if someone is in a risk category. About half of the time, DVT has no symptoms at all.

“Everyone should learn about DVT, find out their level of risk, and talk to someone on their medical team, especially if they're in a high-risk group,” said Dr. Asbjornsen.

There are many trusted online resources about DVT prevention and treatment:

- [StopTheClot.org](http://StopTheClot.org)
- [PreventDVT.org](http://PreventDVT.org)
- [OneBreath.org](http://OneBreath.org)
- [ThisIsSerious.org](http://ThisIsSerious.org)
- [CDC.gov/features/thrombosis](http://CDC.gov/features/thrombosis)

[1] Fitzmaurice DA, Murray E. Thromboprophylaxis for adults in hospital. *BMJ*. 2007;334(7602):1017-1018.

To learn more about how to identify, prevent and treat DVT and other venous disorders, visit <http://www.veinhealthcare.com>.

Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen is the founder of the [Maine Phlebology Association](#) and the Vein Healthcare Center in Maine. Dr. Asbjornsen is certified by the American Board of Phlebology and cares for all levels of venous disease, including spider veins, varicose veins and venous stasis ulcers.