



## *About Venous Disease*

### What are Venous Diseases?

Venous diseases are acute or chronic disorders of the veins and include the following:

- Venous Thromboembolism, which includes Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism
- Chronic Venous Insufficiency
- Post-Thrombotic Syndrome
- Varicose Veins

### What is Venous Thromboembolism or “VTE”?

Venous Thromboembolism or “VTE” is a common, potentially life-threatening, but treatable and largely preventable disorder that includes two related conditions:

- 1) Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) - Abnormal clotting of the blood in one or more veins, most commonly the veins of the leg; and
- 2) Pulmonary Embolism (PE) - Occurs when a DVT breaks free from its original site in a vein and then travels through the heart and then into the lungs.

### How Common is VTE?

VTE is very common.

- VTE is the third most common vascular disorder after heart disease and stroke
- Few Americans have any knowledge about VTE or how to prevent it
- VTE occurs in nearly 1 million Americans every year
- More than 100,000 Americans die from PE every year
- Death from VTE is five times more common than all deaths from breast cancer, car crashes and AIDS combined
- In more than 90% of fatal cases of PE, there was no use of therapy to prevent death
- VTE can affect men and women of all ages, including newborns and pregnant women
- The risk of VTE increases as we get older
- Among hospitalized patients who receive no intervention to prevent VTE the risk of developing a DVT is:
  - 10-20% in patients admitted with an acute medical illness (such as pneumonia or heart failure)
  - 20-40% after a major general surgical or gynecologic procedure
  - 40-60% after hip or knee replacement surgery
  - 60-80% after a spinal cord injury

### Who's at Risk?

- VTE may affect people who have recently had surgery or who are admitted to the hospital for a medical illness
- Pregnancy, the birth control pill, hormone replacement therapy, leg injury or major injury elsewhere, certain cancers, many cancer treatments, and reduced mobility increase the risk of VTE.
- Approximately one third of patients who develop VTE have no identifiable risk factors.
- Approximately one in ten healthy people have a disorder of their blood clotting system which increases their chances of developing VTE in the future – many of these blood clotting disorders are inherited