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Media Release

Patients can help reduce thrombosis risk

The risk of developing a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in hospital is almost 1,000 times higher than the risk of developing one on a long haul flight. But there is much that a patient can do to reduce their risk of thrombosis during a hospital stay.

Josephine Crowe, consultant in Haematology at the RUH, said: "We already have a good system in place for assessing, preventing and treating thrombosis. All patients admitted to the RUH have a risk assessment to determine the likelihood of them developing a blood clot. Those at high risk are treated with an anticoagulant drug. A second risk assessment is performed after 24 hours.

"If a patient has reason to believe that they are at an increased risk of developing thrombosis we would encourage them to tell the ward staff upon being admitted to hospital. We would rather prevent a thrombosis than have to treat one that develops during your stay."

People can self-assess their risk of developing thrombosis by visiting the NHS Choices website and taking a short and simple online quiz (visit www.nhs.uk and search 'VTE self-assessment').

Susan Scott, recently appointed as nurse specialist in prevention of hospital acquired thrombosis, added: "As well as ensuring that we give the best treatment to try and prevent clots, we want to educate staff, patients and their families about how we can work together to help reduce the number of people who get a clot.

"If yours is a planned procedure, losing a little weight (if you are overweight) and giving up smoking ahead of your visit could help to decrease your risk. If you are on the combined contraceptive pill or are on a course of HRT then you should talk to your doctor, as this can also increase your risk."

Patients can further reduce the risk of developing thrombosis whilst in hospital by:

- Drinking plenty of fluids to keep hydrated
- Getting up and moving around as soon as advised to and exercising legs in bed
- Wearing any compression devices given (such as stockings) and following the directions of staff about when and how long to wear them
- Taking and completing the full course of any blood-thinning medicines prescribed

National Thrombosis Week is a week-long awareness-raising campaign to increase understanding about thrombosis amongst the public and to help educate the medical community, and is being highlighted at the RUH from 6-9th May 2014.

Information and advice about thrombosis can be found on the NHS Choices website (www.nhs.uk) and on the Thrombosis Charity website (www.thrombosis-charity.org.uk)

Ends



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