HOSPITALIZED? PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM BLOOD CLOTS IS AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

1. BE AWARE, ASK QUESTIONS

   Hospitalization greatly increases blood clot risk. If you are hospitalized or planning for surgery, ask your doctor:
   - Am I at risk for blood clots?
   - Should I be on a medication to prevent blood clots? (You may hear such blood clot prevention measures called ‘DVT prophylaxis’ by your doctor.)
     - If yes, then: How long should I be on this medication? Only while I’m hospitalized or also after I go home?
   - Should I be given elastic compression stockings or a sequential compression device (stockings that inflate with air) to wear while hospitalized?

2. KNOW YOUR RISK FACTORS

   Factors that increase blood clot risk that you should discuss with your doctor:
   - **Immobility:**
     - Hospitalization
     - Prolonged sitting
   - **Surgery and Trauma:**
     - Major surgery (pelvis, abdomen, hip, knee)
     - Bone fracture or cast
     - Catheter in a big vein
   - **Increased estrogens:**
     - Birth control pills, patches, rings
     - Pregnancy, for up to 6 weeks after giving birth
     - Hormone therapy
   - **Medical conditions:**
     - Cancer and its treatment
     - Heart failure
     - Inflammatory disorders, such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease
   - **Other risk factors:**
     - Previous blood clot
     - Family history of clots
     - Clotting disorder
     - Obesity
     - Smoking
     - Older age

3. KNOW THE SYMPTOMS

   **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT):**
   A clot that typically is in one leg (can also be in arm). Symptoms range from mild to severe; may involve the foot, ankle, calf, whole leg or arm.
   - Pain
   - Swelling
   - Discoloration (bluish or reddish)
   - Warmth

   **Pulmonary Embolism:**
   A blood clot in the lungs
   - Shortness of breath
   - Chest pain (may be worse with deep breath)
   - Unexplained cough (may cough up blood)
   - Unexplained rapid heart rate

Learn more about blood clots online at: ClotConnect.org

If you have any of these symptoms, tell your health care provider right away!