Venous thromboembolism (VTE) prophylaxis in pregnancy and the puerperium
Flow Chart: VTE assessment for pregnant and postpartum women

Assess women on an individual basis. Liaise with a team experienced in prophylactic assessment and management as required

Early in pregnancy assess:
- Personal/family history of VTE
- Presence of thrombophilia
- Known risk factors
- Medical comorbidities
- Contraindications to prophylaxis
- Signs/symptoms of VTE

Perform VTE risk assessment

Develop VTE prevention plan

Monitor and reassess risk

Prepare for discharge/ongoing care

Advise women of:
- Increased risk of VTE in pregnancy and puerperium
- Signs/symptoms of VTE
- Importance of mobilising and avoiding dehydration
- Options and risks/benefits of prophylaxis

As indicated by assessment
- Liaise with expert
- Offer/recommend prophylaxis
  - GCS
  - IPC or SCD
  - LMWH
- Discuss
  - Side effects of prophylaxis
  - Implications for birth
  - Ongoing risk of VTE

Repeat assessment if:
- Antenatal hospital admission
- Pregnancy complications
- Prolonged immobility
- Other change in risk status

If prophylaxis indicated
- Plan intrapartum care (consider planned birth if indicated)
- Consider anaesthetic referral from 32 weeks
- Precautions for neuraxial blockade

Postnatal risk
- Assess intrapartum or within 6 hours of birth
- Review VTE prevention plan and adjust as required

Advise women of:
- Increased risk of VTE postpartum
- Signs/symptoms of VTE and seeking help
- Importance of correct use, application and duration of prophylaxis
- Implications for future pregnancy

Pharmacological prophylaxis
- Provide prescription for entire postnatal course

Refer as required
- For ongoing management
- GP follow-up

Signs and symptoms VTE
- PE: dyspnoea, palpitations/tachycardia, chest pain, haemoptysis, tachypnoea, hypotension, collapse
- DVT: unilateral leg pain, swelling in extremity, increase in calf circumference (more than 2 cm), increased temperature, prominent superficial veins, pitting oedema

Flowchart: Antenatal and postnatal thromboprophylaxis according to risk

**High risk**
- Family history (1st degree relative) of unprovoked or estrogen provoked VTE
- Single VTE provoked by surgery
- Prolonged (>35 years)
- Parity ≥ 3
- Smoking (any amount)
- Gross varicose veins
- Current BMI 30−39 kg/m²
- Current BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²
- IVF/ART
- Multiple pregnancy
- Pre-eclampsia in current pregnancy
- Immobility
- Preeclampsia
- Severe hyperemesis or dehydration requiring IV fluid

**Selective all that apply at every assessment (antenatal or postnatal)**
- Family history (1st degree relative) of unprovoked or estrogen provoked VTE
- Single VTE provoked by surgery
- Prolonged (>35 years)
- Parity ≥ 3
- Smoking (any amount)
- Gross varicose veins
- Current BMI 30−39 kg/m²
- Current BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²
- IVF/ART
- Multiple pregnancy
- Pre-eclampsia in current pregnancy
- Immobility
- Preeclampsia
- Severe hyperemesis or dehydration requiring IV fluid

**Sum all risk scores**
- 1
- 3
- 1
- 1
- 2
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 3

**Antenatal risk score**
- ≥ 4
  - LMWH standard prophylaxis
    - From time of assessment

**Postnatal risk score**
- ≥ 3
  - LMWH standard prophylaxis
    - Until discharge
    - 7 days (or longer if ongoing risk)

**Antenatal and postnatal thromboprophylaxis**
- LMWH standard prophylaxis
  - From first trimester
  - Continue 6 weeks postpartum

**Therapeutic anticoagulation**
- Continue/commence antenatal
- Continue 6 weeks postpartum

**Flowchart: F20.9-2-V1-R25**

Refer to online version, destroy printed copies after use
Assess women on an individual basis
Consult with or refer to an experienced physician as required

### Family history of VTE but no personal history VTE

**ANTENATAL**
- Therapeutic anticoagulation
- High prophylaxis OR Therapeutic anticoagulation
- Standard prophylaxis
- Clinical surveillance
- If ≥ 1 other risk factor
  - Standard prophylaxis

**POSTNATAL**
- Therapeutic anticoagulation
- Standard prophylaxis
- Clinical surveillance
- If ≥ 1 other risk factor
  - Standard prophylaxis

### No family history and no personal history VTE

**ANTENATAL**
- Consider standard prophylaxis
- Clinical surveillance
- If ≥ 2 other risk factors
  - Standard prophylaxis

**POSTNATAL**
- Consider standard prophylaxis
- Clinical surveillance
- If ≥ 1 other risk factor
  - Standard prophylaxis

---

**Enoxaparin: standard prophylaxis (subcut)**
- 50–90 kg: 40 mg daily
- 91–130 kg: 60 mg daily
- > 131 kg: 80 mg daily

**Enoxaparin: high prophylaxis (subcut)**
- 50–130 kg: 80 mg daily
- > 131 kg: 0.5 mg/kg

**Enoxaparin: therapeutic anticoagulation (subcut)**
- Antenatal: 1 mg/kg BD
- Postnatal: 1.5 mg/kg daily

---

**Flowchart: Thromboprophylaxis if thrombophilia**

**High risk thrombophilia:** greater than or equal to 1 laboratory thrombophilia, APS, antithrombin deficiency, protein C deficiency, protein S deficiency, homozygous FVL, homozygous prothrombin mutation, compound heterozygous FVL/prothrombin mutation

**Low risk thrombophilia:** heterozygous FVL, heterozygous prothrombin mutation, antiphospholipid antibodies

---

**Flowchart:** F20.9-3-V1-R25
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### Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Adjusted odds ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>Body mass index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Confidence interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COCP</td>
<td>Combined oral contraceptive pill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVT</td>
<td>Deep vein thrombosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCS</td>
<td>Graduated compression stockings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIT</td>
<td>Heparin induced thrombocytopenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INR</td>
<td>International normalised ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC</td>
<td>Intermittent pneumatic compression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Intravenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMWH</td>
<td>Low molecular weight heparin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Pulmonary embolism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPH</td>
<td>Postpartum haemorrhage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VTE</td>
<td>Venous thromboembolism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Definition of terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family history of VTE</td>
<td>Family history is considered positive if one or more first degree relatives are affected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immobility</td>
<td>Includes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Long distance travel (rail, road or air) of four hours or more(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Majority of time on bedrest—24 hours or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other issue significantly affecting mobility (e.g. paralysis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuraxial blockade</td>
<td>Term that includes both spinal and epidural procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstetrician</td>
<td>Local facilities may as required, differentiate the roles and responsibilities assigned in this document to an 'Obstetrician' according to their specific practitioner group requirements; for example, to General Practitioner Obstetricians, Specialist Obstetricians, Consultants, Senior Registrars and Obstetric Fellows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provoked VTE(^2)</td>
<td>Major transient risk factors (during 3 months before diagnosis of VTE):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Surgery with general anaesthesia over 30 minutes duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confined to hospital bedrest (bathroom privileges only) for at least 3 days with an acute illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Caesarean section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor transient risk factors (during 2 months before diagnosis of VTE):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Surgery with general anaesthesia less than 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hospital admission for less than 3 days with acute illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Oestrogen therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pregnancy or puerperium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confined to bed out of hospital for 3 or more days with acute illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leg injury associated with reduced mobility for 3 or more days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistent risk factor</td>
<td>Actve cancer, inflammatory bowel disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprovoked VTE(^2)</td>
<td>VTE occurring where there are no identified risk factors (transient or persistent).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recurrent VTE</td>
<td>Two or more VTE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thromboprophylaxis</td>
<td>In this guideline:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Standard prophylaxis refers to pharmacological management with the lowest recommended dose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High prophylaxis refers to pharmacological management at doses between standard prophylaxis and therapeutic anticoagulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrombophilia</td>
<td>High risk thrombophilia (any of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presence of more than one laboratory thrombophilia, antithrombin deficiency, antiphospholipid syndrome, protein C deficiency, protein S deficiency, homozygous factor V Leiden, homozygous prothrombin mutation, compound heterozygous factor V Leiden/prothrombin mutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low risk thrombophilia (any of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Heterozygous factor V Leiden, heterozygous prothrombin mutation, antiphospholipid antibodies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

Pulmonary embolism (PE) and deep vein thrombosis (DVT) are two components of a single disease called venous thromboembolism (VTE).3 VTE was the leading cause of direct maternal death in Australia 2006–2016.4 World-wide there has been no consistent decrease in mortality over the past 20 years.5 This may be due to deficiencies in standard risk assessment tools and care recommendations, or to changes in the characteristics of women giving birth (e.g. increasing age and obesity).

1.1 Burden of disease

Failure to recognise and/or treat personal or pregnancy specific risk factors has been identified as a significant contributing factor to maternal mortality and morbidity arising from VTE in pregnancy.5

Table 1. Burden of disease

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Increased risk in pregnancy3  | • 4 to 5-fold increased risk of developing a VTE in pregnancy due to3,6,7  
  o Hypercoagulability  
  o Increased venous stasis  
  o Decreased venous outflow  
  o Compression of the inferior vena cava and pelvic veins by the gravid uterus  
  o Decreased mobility  
  o Altered levels of coagulation factors responsible for haemostasis |
| Prevalence                    | • VTE complicates approximately 1.2 of every 1000 births3,8  
  • Risk higher in third trimester compared with first and second trimester3,7,9  
  • Greatest risk in the weeks immediately after birth3,7  
  • Risk declines to that of general population by about 13 to 18 weeks postpartum10  
  • Recurrence rate 2–11%11 |
| Aetiology                     | • 75–80% caused by DVT3  
  o Higher frequency of iliofemoral (64%) and iliac vein involvement (17%)  
  o DVT more common in left lower extremity  
  o Proximal VTE more common in pregnant than non-pregnant population  
  • 20–25% caused by PE3 |
| Morbidity                     | • One third of the general population with DVT develop post-thrombotic syndrome (PTS) within five years12  
  o Characterised by chronic pain, swelling, skin changes in the affected limb, paraesthesia, venous leg ulceration5 and lower quality of life7 |
| Mortality                     | • Most maternal deaths result from PE5  
  • In Australia 2006–2016, VTE was responsible for 10.6% of maternal deaths4  
  • In the United States, 2011–2013, PE was responsible for 9.2% of maternal deaths13  
  • In the United Kingdom, 2014–2016 VTE was responsible for 14% of maternal deaths5  
  • The same maternal mortality rate (1.4 per 100,000) as in 1985–875  
  • In the United Kingdom, 2006–2008, 89% of maternal deaths from PE had identifiable risk factors  
  o Obesity (body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 30 kg/m²) was identified in 57% of these5 |
1.2 Signs and symptoms of VTE
Inform women about the signs and symptoms of VTE. Refer to Section 3.1 Communicating risk and benefit.

Table 2. Signs and symptoms of VTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pulmonary embolism</td>
<td>• Dyspnoea (most common symptom of PE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Palpitations/tachycardia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Chest pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Haemoptysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hypoxia/cyanosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tachypnoea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hypotension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collapse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep vein thrombosis</td>
<td>• In pregnancy is often proximal and may not present with usual features of distal DVT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Unilateral leg pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Swelling in an extremity with pitting oedema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase in calf/thigh circumference particularly of 2 cm or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prominent superficial veins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pitting oedema</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 Clinical standards
Provide care in accordance with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC): Venous Thromboembolism Prevention Clinical Care Standard.14

Table 3. Clinical standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACSQHC clinical care standards</td>
<td>• The VTE prevention clinical care standard includes:14:  o Assess and document VTE risk  o Develop a VTE prevention plan, balancing the risk of VTE against bleeding  o Inform and partner with the woman  o Document and communicate the VTE prevention plan  o Use approved VTE prevention methods  o Reassess risk and monitor for VTE related complications  o Transition from hospital and ongoing care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard documentation</td>
<td>• Use an agreed risk assessment tool:  o No widely accepted scoring system has been prospectively validated in the obstetric population  o There is evidence that clinicians find existing risk scoring systems difficult to apply consistently in practice5  • Document completion of the inpatient risk assessment  • Use standard administration forms for prophylactic and therapeutic medications (e.g. heparin intravenous infusion order and administration form15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinician education</td>
<td>• Inconsistency of risk assessment is identified as a major contributor to maternal mortality from VTE:5  • Provide opportunities to increase competency and consistency of risk assessment (e.g. team review/discussion of complex cases, disseminate results of clinical audit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical audit</td>
<td>• Undertake regular audit to assess whether:  o Thromboembolism risk assessment was performed  o Risk assessment was correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of care</td>
<td>• Provide care in accordance with local service capabilities  • Consult with, refer or transfer care to higher level services as appropriate16  • Document processes for referral and transfer appropriate to local facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Risk factors
The evidence correlating risk factors and the occurrence of VTE is imprecise with wide and sometimes contradictory estimates of risk.17 The presence of multiple risk factors may have additive or synergistic effects11,17,18 but the combinations with the greatest risk are unknown.

2.1 Personal history of VTE
The strongest personal risk factor for VTE in pregnancy is a history of VTE. 15–25% of VTE in pregnancy are recurrent events.19 A history of unprovoked VTE (no identifiable associated risk factor) carries a greater risk than a history of provoked VTE (associated risk factor can be identified).

2.2 Thrombophilia and risk of VTE
Thrombophilia is present in 20–50% of women who experience VTE during pregnancy and postpartum.19 For women with thrombophilia, who have no personal history of VTE but do have a family history of VTE, the risk of VTE is increased two to four-fold, depending on the number and age of affected relatives.20 Seek expert advice about individual thromboprophylaxis requirements for women with thrombophilia, especially in the presence of additional risk factors. Refer to Flowchart: Pharmacological thromboprophylaxis if thrombophilia

2.2.1 Absolute risk of pregnancy associated VTE with hereditary thrombophilia

Table 4. Estimated absolute risk of pregnancy associated VTE with hereditary thrombophilia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hereditary thrombophilia</th>
<th>Non-family studies</th>
<th>With family history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High risk</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antithrombin deficiency17</td>
<td>0.3–4%</td>
<td>3.0–18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homozygous factor V Leiden mutation17</td>
<td>1.3–2.3%</td>
<td>9.0–17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homozygous prothrombin mutation20</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound heterozygous factor V Leiden/prothrombin mutation17</td>
<td>5.2% (single study)</td>
<td>1.8–5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein C deficiency17</td>
<td>0.5–1.8%</td>
<td>1.7–5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein S deficiency17</td>
<td>0.1%–1.0%</td>
<td>2.0–6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low risk</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterozygous factor V Leiden mutation17</td>
<td>0.2–0.5%</td>
<td>1.5–3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterozygous prothrombin mutation17</td>
<td>0.2–0.4%</td>
<td>1.0–2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family history of VTE with thrombophilia unaffected controls17</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.4–1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Obesity and risk of VTE
Obesity is increasingly recognised as a major risk factor for the development of VTE in pregnancy and the puerperium.21 Increasing BMI is associated with increasing risk.21

Table 5. Adjusted Odds ratio between maternal BMI and VTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI (kg/m²)</th>
<th>Antepartum</th>
<th>Postpartum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n/N</td>
<td>*AOR (95%CI)²¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underweight (less than 18.5)</td>
<td>21/91,115</td>
<td>0.86 (0.5–1.49)#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal BMI (18.5–24.9)</td>
<td>339/1,120,417</td>
<td>reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight (25.0–29.9)</td>
<td>224/589,507</td>
<td>1.27 (1.04–1.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity Class I (30.0–34.9)</td>
<td>122/288,939</td>
<td>1.37 (1.11–1.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity Class II (35.0–39.9)</td>
<td>56/118,368</td>
<td>1.4 (1.01–1.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity Class III (40 or more)</td>
<td>73/69,160</td>
<td>2.89 (2.3–3.81)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=number of events; N=total number of women in each body mass index class
*adjusted for maternal age, race/ethnicity, education, insurance, smoking and parity
# result not significant
2.4 Other known risk factors
It is unclear for most risk factors whether they are more likely to be associated with antenatal or postnatal VTE (or both). For risk factor assessment in pregnancy and the puerperium, refer to:
- Appendix A: Odds ratios for VTE risk factors (where these are known)

3 Risk assessment
No widely accepted scoring system has been prospectively validated in the obstetric population and most have made extrapolations based on relative risk of VTE.3

Table 6. Risk assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Timing of assessment** | • Initial assessment in early pregnancy3 or before conception5  
• Repeat assessment if5:  
  o Antenatal admission to hospital  
  o Pregnancy complication develops (e.g. pre-eclampsia)  
  o Prolonged immobility  
  o Intrapartum or within 6 hours of birth  
• Commencing thromboprophylaxis at times of additional VTE risk is clinically important and appropriate |
| **Assess for:** | • Personal and family history for VTE  
• High risk and other known risk factors for VTE  
• Ask about VTE symptoms  
• Contraindications and cautions for prophylactic options including risk of bleeding |
| **If previous VTE:** | • Before commencing prophylaxis, recommend a full thrombophilia screen including:  
  o Activated protein C resistance (APCR)  
  ▪ Factor V Leiden mutation is included if APCR detected  
  o Prothrombin gene mutation  
  o Antithrombin deficiency  
  o Protein C deficiency (before pregnancy)  
  o Protein S deficiency (before pregnancy)  
  o Antiphospholipid antibodies:  
  ▪ Lupus anticoagulant  
  ▪ Anticardiolipin antibodies  
  ▪ Anti-beta 2 Glycoprotein 1 antibodies (B2GP1) |
| **If pre-existing medical conditions** | • Recommend counselling and advice from a medical specialist as risk of maternal mortality increased with:  
  o Cerebral haemorrhage  
  o Gastrointestinal haemorrhage  
  o Heparin induced thrombocytopenia (HIT)/thrombocytopenia  
  o Renal insufficiency  
  o Mechanical heart valves  
  o Chronic thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension  
  o History of myocardial infarction  
  o Permanent occlusion of a major vessel  
  o History of recurrent thrombosis while fully anticoagulated |
| **Plan care**14 | • Discuss options for VTE thromboprophylaxis with the woman  
• Document a plan of care  
• Liaise with a team experienced in prophylactic assessment and management as required |
| **Referral** | • If there are high risk circumstances:  
  o Refer to an obstetrician or physician experienced in VTE thromboprophylaxis11  
  o Use a multidisciplinary approach to care  
  o Individualise thromboprophylaxis as required  
  o Refer to anaesthetics team to discuss management plan peripartum |
3.1 Communicating risk and benefit

Discuss with the woman her individual risk of VTE in pregnancy and the puerperium, as well as the risks and benefits of VTE prophylaxis appropriate to the circumstances.

Table 7. Communicating risk and benefit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual preferences</td>
<td>• When making recommendations, consider a woman’s values and preferences related to:\n  o Tolerance for risk\n  o Burden associated with use\n  o Medicalisation of pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise women</td>
<td>• Pregnancy alone increases the risk of VTE\n  o Refer to Section 1.1 Burden of disease\n • About symptoms of VTE and the importance of seeking urgent medical assistance if symptoms develop\n  o Refer to Section 1.2 Signs and symptoms of VTE\n • About the importance of mobilisation and hydration in preventing VTE in pregnancy and after birth\n • Limitations in the evidence about risk factors and about prevention strategies in pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risks and benefits</td>
<td>• Discuss risk of VTE in pregnancy to immediate and longer-term health\n • Discuss the risks, benefits and side effects associated with recommendations for VTE prophylaxis\n • Discuss:\n  o Ongoing risk of VTE despite thromboprophylaxis\n  o Burden of prolonged compliance with treatment option\n  o Risk of antenatal and postnatal bleeding with pharmacological thromboprophylaxis and potential management [refer to Queensland Clinical Guidelines: Primary postpartum haemorrhage]\n  o Implications for epidural management and/or the need for general anaesthesia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Thromboprophylaxis according to risk assessment

There is limited high-level evidence to guide decisions about which women will benefit most from thromboprophylaxis. The optimal strategy is unknown and varies significantly between professional organisations. The recommendations in the following sections are based on evidence, expert opinion and consensus. Refer to:

- Flowchart: Antenatal and postnatal pharmacological thromboprophylaxis according to risk
- Flowchart: Pharmacological thromboprophylaxis if thrombophilia

4.1 Intrapartum thromboprophylaxis

Table 8. Intrapartum thromboprophylaxis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan care</td>
<td>• Involve the woman in developing a documented plan of care prior to the onset of labour/planned birth that considers her individual preferences, risk factors and clinical circumstances\n  • Consider anaesthetic referral from 32 weeks gestation for women with multiple co-morbidities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceasing/recommencing anticoagulants</td>
<td>• Liaise with a multidisciplinary team regarding timing of:\n  o Conversion of therapeutic or prophylactic antenatal low molecular weight heparin (LMWH) to unfractionated heparin (UFH)\n  o Cessation of UFH prior to established labour/planned birth\n  o Recomencement of therapeutic anticoagulation following birth\n  • Commence standard prophylaxis within six hours of birth (where haemostasis is assured) following:\n    o Vaginal birth\n    o Caesarean section under general anaesthetic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Neuraxial blockade

Table 9. Neuraxial blockade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Clinical surveillance        | • Refer/discuss with the anaesthetic team prior to labour/planned birth\textsuperscript{24}  
|                               | • Monitor for neuraxial haematoma for 24 hours after commencement of neuraxial blockade or removal of catheter  
|                               | o Spinal haematoma is a clinical emergency more likely to occur at insertion or removal of catheter  
|                               | • If thromboprophylaxis for 4 days or more (LMWH or UFH) consider platelet count before onset of labour\textsuperscript{24}                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Commencement of neuraxial     | • There is limited high-level evidence and significant variation among international professional organisations\textsuperscript{24-30}  
| blockade and interval to next | • Consensus expert opinion in Queensland supports the recommendations of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland, Obstetric Anaesthetists’ Association and Regional Anaesthesia UK\textsuperscript{28} and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists\textsuperscript{11}  
| dose LMWH                     | • In this guideline, the recommended interval from commencement of neuraxial blockade to next dose of LMWH is 4 hours\textsuperscript{28}                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Neuraxial blockade and        | • Consider individual circumstances and seek expert advice\textsuperscript{29}  
| high-risk circumstances       | • If abnormal coagulation, abnormal renal function or in the presence of medications affecting coagulation (e.g. aspirin or non-steroidal), consider more conservative time-frames  
|                               | • Commence UFH in preference to LMWH:  
|                               | o If increased risk of post-partum haemorrhage following caesarean section  
|                               | o As indicated by other clinical circumstances                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Newer agents                  | • Limited safety data about newer drugs (e.g. fondaparinux)  
|                               | • Not recommended in conjunction with neuraxial blockade\textsuperscript{28}                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

4.2.1 Neuraxial blockade and dose intervals

Table 10. Neuraxial blockade interval timings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last dose to neuraxial block</th>
<th>Hours to wait after last dose</th>
<th>Prophylactic</th>
<th>Therapeutic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LMWH</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 hours</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFH*</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>#4 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neuraxial block to next dose</th>
<th>Hours to wait after neuraxial block</th>
<th>Prophylactic</th>
<th>Therapeutic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LMWH</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Avoid with catheter in situ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFH*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last dose to catheter removal</th>
<th>Hours to wait after last dose</th>
<th>Prophylactic</th>
<th>Therapeutic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LMWH</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 hours</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFH*</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catheter removal to next dose</th>
<th>Hours to wait after catheter removal</th>
<th>Prophylactic</th>
<th>Therapeutic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LMWH</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFH*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Seek anaesthetic advice for UFH dosages higher than 5000 units BD or TDS. Therapeutic UFH is via IV infusion  
\# Perform APTT 3–4 hours after ceasing UFH infusion
5 Methods of thromboprophylaxis

5.1 Hydration and mobilisation

Routinely advise pregnant and postnatal women about the risk of VTE in pregnancy and the importance of mobilisation and avoiding dehydration as universal VTE prevention strategies.

Table 11. Hydration and mobilisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fluid intake | • Requirements vary according to environmental conditions, physical activity and individual metabolism\(^\text{31}\)  
   • Recommended average daily fluid intake (including plain water, milk and other drinks)\(^\text{31}\)  
     o For pregnant women is 2.3 L per day  
     o For breastfeeding women 2.6 L per day |
| Exercise     | • For women without complications, recommend activity in accordance with Australian Physical Activity Guidelines as part of a healthy lifestyle\(^\text{32}\)  
   • When recommending exercise, take into account, frequency, intensity, duration and mode of exercise as well as baseline fitness level and exercise experience\(^\text{33}\)  
   • Deep tissue massage is not recommended in the presence of VTE or pharmacological thromboprophylaxis\(^\text{34}\) |

5.2 Mechanical

In combination with other prophylactic modalities, graduated compression stockings (GCS), thromboembolic deterrent stockings (TED stockings) and intermittent pneumatic compression (IPC) or sequential compression devices (SCD) have been shown to reduce the incidence of DVT in high-risk non-pregnant patients.\(^\text{35}\) There is limited evidence that specifically relates to pregnancy and postpartum.

Table 12. Contraindications to mechanical methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Contraindications all mechanical methods\(^\text{36}\) | • Severe peripheral arterial disease or ulcers  
   • Recent skin graft  
   • Peripheral arterial bypass grafting  
   • Severe leg oedema or pulmonary oedema from congestive heart failure  
   • Known allergy to material of manufacture  
   • Severe local problems on legs (e.g. gangrene, dermatitis, untreated infected wounds, fragile ‘tissue paper’ skin) |
| Contraindications stockings\(^\text{36}\) | • Admission for stroke  
   • Severe leg deformity or morbid obesity preventing correct fit  
   • Severe peripheral neuropathy |

5.2.1 Intermittent pneumatic compression or sequential compression devices

Table 13. Compression devices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Context        | • Improves blood flow and prevents venous stasis\(^\text{37}\)  
   • In non-obstetric patients IPC device in combination with pharmacologic agents shown to be superior to IPC alone\(^\text{37}\)  
   • Weak evidence from surgical patients suggests IPC may be more effective than GCS\(^\text{38}\)  
   • May cover whole leg, calf only or foot only |
| Application\(^\text{36}\) | • Measure and fit for each woman  
   • Position inflation pad over calf for maximum effectiveness  
   • Can be applied over bare legs, pyjama pants or socks  
   • Check skin integrity regularly |
| Recommendation | • Recommend use after CS at least until the following day  
   • If risk factors for VTE and hospitalised or immobile (antenatal or postnatal), offer use of compression device  
   • Consider overnight use for inpatient postnatal women considered unsuitable for stockings (e.g. morbid obesity) |
### 5.2.2 Lower extremity stockings

Table 14. Lower extremity stockings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduated compression stockings</strong></td>
<td>• Primarily for ambulatory patients&lt;br&gt;• Compression levels range from 15–60 mmHg&lt;br&gt;  o Above 20 mmHg generally considered prescription strength (usually those requiring increased compression for conditions such as venous insufficiency, lymphedema and varicose veins)&lt;br&gt;  o Greatest degree of compression at the ankle where the effect of gravity is greatest on the veins while standing&lt;sup&gt;35&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;• Reduction in postpartum VTE from 4.3% to 0.9% reported when GCS used in conjunction with LMWH in high risk women&lt;sup&gt;39&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;• Conflicting evidence about the role of GCS in reducing incidence of PTS after DVT&lt;sup&gt;12,40&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;• Limited evidence for duration of application postpartum&lt;sup&gt;41&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;  o Most studies (primarily surgical patients) report use until discharge or full ambulation&lt;sup&gt;35&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TED stockings</strong></td>
<td>• Primarily for non-ambulatory patients or immediately post-surgery to prevent pooling of the blood in the legs&lt;br&gt;• Compression level&lt;br&gt;  o At or below 20 mmHg&lt;br&gt;  o Greatest degree of compression at the calf where blood tends to pool when in bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knee versus thigh length</strong></td>
<td>• Insufficient quality evidence to determine whether knee or thigh length stockings differ in effectiveness for reducing incidence of DVT&lt;sup&gt;42,43&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;• Consider comfort, compliance and physical characteristics of the woman when recommending length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application</strong></td>
<td>• Measure and fit for each woman&lt;sup&gt;44&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;  o Refer to the manufacturer’s instructions on measuring&lt;br&gt;  o Seek assistance from a health professional trained in garment sizing and application&lt;br&gt;  o Provide instruction for washing and reuse&lt;sup&gt;44&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;• Compliance is essential—encourage&lt;sup&gt;44&lt;/sup&gt;:&lt;br&gt;  o Continuous wearing&lt;br&gt;  o Not to roll stocking down&lt;br&gt;  o To wear footwear to minimise risk of slipping&lt;br&gt;  o Correctly fitted knee length stockings finish 3 cm below the popliteal fossa&lt;br&gt;• Check skin integrity regularly&lt;br&gt;• Most frequently reported adverse effects are itching, erythema and rash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td>• Provide information about potential benefit and adverse effects of use&lt;br&gt;• Recommend if receiving pharmacological thromboprophylaxis (antenatal or postnatal)&lt;br&gt;• Consider for postnatal women until fully mobile&lt;br&gt;• Discuss ongoing requirement on an individual basis according to risk assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5.3 Pharmacological

Table 15. Pharmacological prophylaxis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Context**                                 | • Limited evidence upon which to base recommendations for thromboprophylaxis during pregnancy and the early postnatal period\(^{45}\)  
  • Individually according to assessment of risk factors and clinical circumstances  
  • Contradictory and varied evidence about creatine clearance levels and LMWH accumulation\(^{46,47}\)  
  • Seek expert advice as required                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| **Animal origins of heparin sodium**        | • Heparin sodium and other LMWH commonly used in pregnancy are porcine derived\(^{48}\)  
  • If unacceptable for religious/cultural reasons, seek expert advice about the use of clinical alternatives that may be suitable for use in pregnancy  
  • Fondaparinux is a synthetic antithrombotic agent that *may be* suitable as a clinical alternative\(^{49}\)                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| **Contraindications**                       | • Known hypersensitivity\(^{50}\)  
  • History of or current HIT\(^{50,51}\)  
  • Creatinine clearance less than 15 mL/minute associated with significant platelet dysfunction—seek expert advice before use                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| **Cautions**                                | • Renal impairment\(^{51}\) (Creatinine clearance less than 30 mL/minute)  
  • Consider heparin sodium (UFH) in preference to LMWH\(^ {50}\)  
  • Hepatic impairment\(^{50}\)  
  • Thrombocytopenia\(^{50}\) (Platelets less than 100 x 10\(^9\)/L or trending down)  
  • May increase bleeding risk but does not protect against VTE\(^ {52}\)                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| **Risk factors for bleeding\(^{36}\)**     | • Active antenatal or postpartum bleeding (requiring at least two units of blood or blood products to be transfused in 24 hours, or primary postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) greater than 1 L)  
  • Chronic, clinically significant and measurable bleeding over 48 hours  
  • Women at risk of major haemorrhage (e.g. placenta praevia)  
  • Acquired or inherited bleeding disorders (e.g. acute liver failure, Von Willebrand’s disease)  
  • Recent central nervous system bleeding  
  • Intracranial or spinal lesion  
  • Abnormal blood coagulation  
  • Thrombocytopenia  
  • Severe platelet dysfunction (e.g. Bernard Soulier, Glanzmann’s thrombasthenia) or antiplatelet drug use  
  • Active peptic ulcer or active ulcerative gastrointestinal disease  
  • Obstructive jaundice or cholestasis  
  • Recent major surgical procedure of high bleeding risk  
  • Concomitant use of medications that may affect the clotting process  
  • Neuraxial analgesia (epidural in labour ward) or anaesthesia (spinal or epidural for operative procedure) or diagnostic lumbar puncture
5.3.1 Low molecular weight heparin

Class of drug that includes dalteparin, enoxaparin and nadroparin (as well as others less commonly used in pregnancy). Low molecular weight heparin products are not clinically interchangeable.53

Table 16. Low molecular weight heparin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fetus/newborn</td>
<td>• Does not cross placenta3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No evidence of teratogenicity or increased risk of fetal bleeding53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safe while breastfeeding20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety profile</td>
<td>• A systematic review (n=2603 pregnancies) with thromboprophylaxis or adverse pregnancy outcome as the indication for LMWH (enoxaparin, dalteparin or nadroparin) reported54:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No maternal deaths or HIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o VTE 0.84 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Significant maternal bleeding 2% (11/52 antenatal bleeding, 24/52 primary obstetric cause at birth, 17/52 wound haematoma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Thrombocytopenia 0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Allergic skin reactions 1.84% (3/48 with enoxaparin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Compared to UFH, LMWH associated with55:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Fewer bleeding episodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Lower risk of HIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Lower risk of heparin induced osteoporosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>• Consider baseline platelet count, serum creatinine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Routine monitoring of anti-Xa levels not recommended20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consider periodic platelet count as indicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>• LMWH is safe and effective for prevention of VTE in pregnancy54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agent of choice for antenatal and postnatal thromboprophylaxis3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduce dose if renal impairment56 or consider UFH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consider increased dose if antithrombin deficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2 Unfractionated heparin

Table 17. Unfractionated heparin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fetus/newborn</td>
<td>• Does not cross the placenta56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No evidence of teratogenicity55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safe while breastfeeding20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety profile</td>
<td>• Associated with increased bruising at the injection site3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May be preferred20:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o If significant renal dysfunction20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o When rapid reversal of anticoagulation may be required20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o If high risk of VTE and neuraxial blockade recommendations for LMWH limit early commencement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Associated with higher risk of bleeding, HIT and heparin induced osteoporosis than LMWH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>• Consider baseline platelet count and monitor for HIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>• Not routinely recommended as first line thromboprophylaxis in pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consider switching from LMWH to UFH prior to onset of labour/planned birth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.3 Other anticoagulants

Table 18. Other anticoagulants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Warfarin                     | • Vitamin K antagonist that is teratogenic especially in the first trimester<sup>3</sup>  
• Crosses placenta and may cause fetal haemorrhage  
• Seek specialist advice before use during pregnancy  
• For women with mechanical heart valves  
  o May be indicated based on individual assessment of risk and benefit  
  o Recommendation incorporates the woman’s values and preferences<sup>57</sup>  
  o Seek specialist advice  
• Safe while breastfeeding<sup>58</sup>  
• Consider postnatal only if prolonged thromboprophylaxis/treatment indicated<sup>52</sup>  
• For women with mechanical heart valves  
  o May be indicated based on individual assessment of risk and benefit  
  o Recommendation incorporates the woman’s values and preferences<sup>57</sup>  
  o Seek specialist advice  
• Safe while breastfeeding<sup>58</sup>  
• Consider postnatal only if prolonged thromboprophylaxis/treatment indicated<sup>52</sup> |
| Fondaparinux or Fraxiparine  | • Discuss with a team experienced in their use before commencement  
• Limit fondaparinux to women with severe allergic reactions to heparin who cannot receive danaparoid<sup>59</sup>  
• Withhold for 5 days prior to birth (due to long half-life)                                                                                                                                               |
| Other direct thrombin and factor Xa inhibitors | • Includes: rivaroxaban, apixaban, edoxaban, dabigatran  
• Avoid use in pregnancy including while breastfeeding<sup>50</sup>  
  o Limited information about use in pregnancy and while breastfeeding<sup>3,20</sup>  
• Not recommended in conjunction with neuraxial blockade<sup>28</sup> |
| Aspirin                      | • No controlled trials on the use of aspirin for thromboprophylaxis in pregnancy  
• The American College of Physicians recommend against the use of aspirin as sole agent for VTE prophylaxis in any pregnancy<sup>50</sup>  
• No adverse fetal or maternal outcomes were reported in a meta-analysis of large randomised controlled trials of low-dose aspirin for the prevention of pre-eclampsia in pregnancy<sup>50</sup>  
• Insufficient evidence to recommend routine use of aspirin for thromboprophylaxis in the antenatal or postnatal period                                                                                   |

5.4 Dosage

There is limited data about the optimal dosage regimen and a variety of regimens are used. Use clinical judgement and consult with an expert as required. Recommended dosage based on actual (current or last recorded) weight in kilograms, including current postnatal weight.<sup>11</sup>

5.4.1 Standard prophylactic dosage

Twice daily dosing may be more effective than once daily dosing in obese women.<sup>56</sup>

Table 19. Standard prophylactic dosage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current weight (kg)</th>
<th>Dalteparin&lt;sup&gt;11,20&lt;/sup&gt; (LMWH)</th>
<th>Enoxaparin&lt;sup&gt;11,20&lt;/sup&gt; (LMWH)</th>
<th>Heparin Sodium&lt;sup&gt;3,51&lt;/sup&gt; (UFH)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50</td>
<td>2,500 units daily</td>
<td>20 mg daily</td>
<td>Consider reduced dose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–90</td>
<td>5,000 units daily</td>
<td>40 mg daily</td>
<td>5,000 units twice per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91–130</td>
<td>7,500 units daily</td>
<td>60 mg daily*</td>
<td>7,500 units twice per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131–170</td>
<td>10,000 units daily</td>
<td>80 mg daily*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171 or more</td>
<td>75 units/kg/day</td>
<td>0.5 mg/kg/day*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* may be administered in divided dose
5.4.2 High prophylactic dosage
Consider for women with multiple significant risk factors (e.g. previous DVT while on standard prophylactic dose, antiphospholipid syndrome and history of DVT and in women at increased risk of arterial thrombosis e.g. homocysteinaemia). High prophylactic dosage is usually between the prophylactic and the therapeutic dose. Seek advice from an experienced team.

Table 20. High prophylactic dosage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current weight (kg)</th>
<th>Administer via subcutaneous route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dalteparin\textsuperscript{11,20} (LMWH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50*</td>
<td>2,500 units twice per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–130</td>
<td>5,000 units twice per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131 or more*</td>
<td>7,500 units twice per day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Suggested regimen is not evidence based. If body weight less than 50 kg or 130 kg or more, seek expert advice

5.4.3 Therapeutic anticoagulation
If weight greater than 100 kg, liaise with an experienced physician regarding dose. If the woman has antithrombin deficiency, consider increased dose and monitoring of anti-Xa levels.

Table 21. Therapeutic anticoagulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalteparin</td>
<td>100 units/kg twice per day\textsuperscript{61}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enoxaparin</td>
<td>Antenatal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o 1 mg/kg subcutaneous twice per day\textsuperscript{61}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postnatal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o 1.5 mg/kg subcutaneous daily\textsuperscript{61}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heparin sodium (UFH)</td>
<td>Loading Dose\textsuperscript{61}:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o 80 units/kg IV stat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infusion\textsuperscript{61}:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o 18 units/kg/hour IV infusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitor APTT\textsuperscript{61} as per Queensland Health form: Heparin intravenous infusion order and administration–adult\textsuperscript{15}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warfarin</td>
<td>Variable oral dose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Aim for INR 2–3 unless specified otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refer to Queensland Health’s guidelines for anticoagulation using warfarin\textsuperscript{62,63}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6 Discharge

#### Table 22. Discharge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **VTE risk**         | • Offer postnatal women and their families verbal and written information on  
|                      |   o Signs and symptoms of VTE  
|                      |   o How to reduce the risk of VTE  
|                      |   o Risk associated with prolonged immobility (e.g. long-distance travel, cultural practices associated with ‘lying in’64)                                                                                 |
| **Prophylaxis continuation** | • If prophylaxis to continue beyond discharge, advise about:  
|                      |   o Importance of compliance with VTE prophylaxis  
|                      |   o Correct use/application and duration of recommended treatment including onset of action, monitoring requirements and side effects of recommended treatment  
|                      |   o The importance of seeking help and who to contact if concerned  
|                      |   o Provide prescriptions for pharmacological thromboprophylaxis for the entire postnatal course5                                                                                                           |
| **Subsequent pregnancy** | • Discuss future anti-coagulation needs for subsequent pregnancies  
|                      |   • Advise pre-conception consultation with health care provider                                                                                                                                           |
| **Ongoing care**     | • If required, recommend pain relief to facilitate mobility  
|                      |   • Refer as required to medical physician or other specialist for ongoing management  
|                      |   • Communicate to GP advice for ongoing thromboprophylaxis (e.g. type, dose, duration, recommendation for contraceptive choice, plan for next pregnancy)                                                   |
References


26. References


### Appendix A: Odds ratios for VTE risk factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>AOR (OR)</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous VTE</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>17.1–36</td>
<td>n=603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 35 years or more</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.0–1.7</td>
<td>pn=256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI 30 mg/kg² or more</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.09–6.45</td>
<td>n=129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI 25 mg/kg² or more</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.1–13.5</td>
<td>n=143 an PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI 25 mg/kg² or more</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.4–5.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous VTE</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.2–2.4</td>
<td>pn=256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parity 1</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.6–9.84</td>
<td>n=143 an PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parity 2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.1–1.9</td>
<td>n=603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parity 3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8–3.1</td>
<td>n=603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.3–3.4</td>
<td>an=268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking 10–30 per day</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.0–5.5</td>
<td>pn=291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking 10–30 per day</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.1–1.9</td>
<td>n=603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking 10–30 per day</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.3–4.7</td>
<td>n=90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current smoker</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.5–4.9</td>
<td>n=129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickle cell</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.4–10.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.2–8.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic lupus erythematous (SLE)</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5.8–13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaemia</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.2–2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varicose veins</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.0–4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immobility</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>3.2–19</td>
<td>an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immobility</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>4.0–28.8</td>
<td>pn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preeclampsia</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.1–3.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preeclampsia and fetal growth restriction</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.8–5.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperemesis</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2–3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisted reproductive technology</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.0–9.4</td>
<td>an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twins</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.1–6.2</td>
<td>an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple pregnancy</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.8–9.7</td>
<td>n=603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterm delivery less than 36 weeks</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.6–3.5</td>
<td>an=109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antepartum haemorrhage</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.8–2.8</td>
<td>pn=256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesarean section (emergency)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.8–4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesarean section (elective)</td>
<td>*2.30</td>
<td>1.72 to 3.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesarean section (any)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.0–4.3</td>
<td>pn=256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpartum haemorrhage</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.3–7.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpartum haemorrhage and surgery</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.9–36.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obstetric haemorrhage</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.1–71</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Postpartum infection</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.9–5.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpartum infection and caesarean section</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2.4–16.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfusion</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.2–9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AOR: adjusted odds ratio; an=antenatal; pn=postnatal; n=number of cases in case-control study; OR: odds ratio

Acknowledgements
Queensland Clinical Guidelines gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Queensland clinicians and other stakeholders who participated throughout the guideline development process particularly:

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Funding
This clinical guideline was funded by Healthcare Improvement Unit, Queensland Health