



BLOOD CLOT

Awareness Month

2026 Toolkit

STRONG ENOUGH TO ASK

A CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE CLOT®



EDUCATION • SELF-ADVOCACY • ACTION

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Too often, people hesitate to speak up when something doesn't feel right. Blood clots can take advantage of that silence — but asking questions sooner can save lives.

About Blood Clot Awareness Month (BCAM)

Each March, the National Blood Clot Alliance observes Blood Clot Awareness Month (BCAM) to raise awareness about blood clots — a serious and often overlooked public health issue affecting approximately 900,000 Americans each year and contributing to 100,000 deaths, many of which are preventable. BCAM is an opportunity to educate the public, empower patients and caregivers, support healthcare professionals, and encourage conversations that lead to prevention, earlier diagnosis, and better outcomes — ultimately saving lives.

About the National Blood Clot Alliance (NBCA)

The National Blood Clot Alliance (NBCA) is a nonprofit dedicated to preventing life-threatening blood clots and improving outcomes for those affected. Through education, advocacy, and national awareness campaigns like Blood Clot Awareness Month, NBCA empowers people to recognize risk, speak up sooner, and help save lives.

Why Awareness Matters

Despite their prevalence, blood clots are frequently missed or diagnosed too late, in part because symptoms can be subtle, unexpected, or mistaken for other conditions. Increasing awareness helps people recognize warning signs sooner, ask the right questions, and take timely action — all of which can save lives.

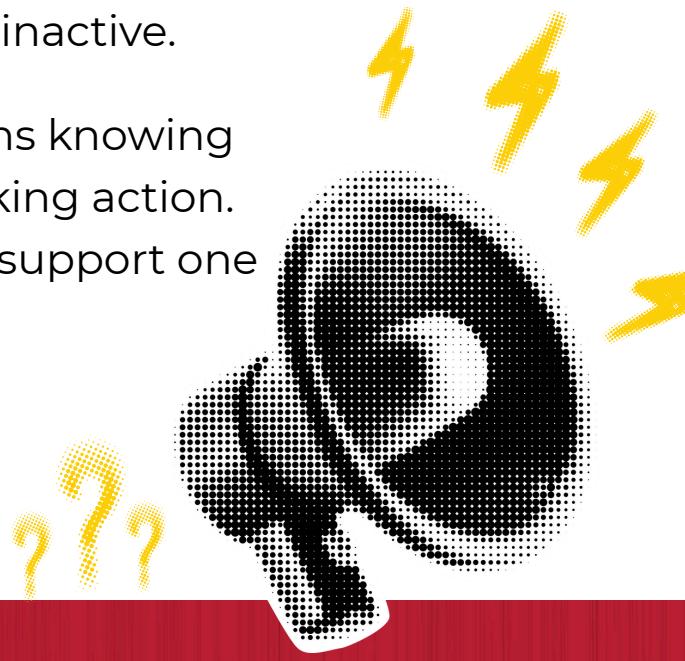


Campaign Theme: Strong Enough to Ask

The 2026 Blood Clot Awareness Month (BCAM) theme, **Strong Enough to Ask – A Campaign to Stop the Clot[®]**, reframes strength as self-advocacy. It challenges the idea that strength means ignoring symptoms or pushing through discomfort. Instead, this campaign emphasizes recognizing when something doesn't feel right, trusting your instincts, and speaking up before a blood clot becomes life-threatening.

Athletes help bring this message to life. Trained to listen to their bodies and respond to early warning signs, they demonstrate that asking questions and seeking care is a smart, proactive health decision — not a weakness. Their stories also challenge the misconception that blood clots only affect people who are older or inactive.

Being **Strong Enough to Ask** means knowing your body, using your voice, and taking action. Together, we can speak up sooner, support one another, and help Stop the Clot.



This toolkit is designed to meet people where they are, offering clear, practical ways to learn about blood clots and take action in support of Blood Clot Awareness Month throughout March.

You don't need to do everything. Choose one or more ways to engage that fit your role, your time, and your comfort level — every action makes a difference.

Who This Toolkit Is For

Individuals & Families

Anyone looking to understand blood clot risk, recognize warning signs, and know when to speak up.

Patients & Caregivers

Those navigating blood clot risk, diagnosis, or recovery who want tools to support self-advocacy and conversations with care teams.

Healthcare Professionals

Clinicians and care teams seeking resources to support patient-centered conversations and prevention efforts.

Community Leaders & Advocates

Educators, faith leaders, employers, and policymakers working to raise awareness at the community level.

Be sure to tag
@StopTheClot and use
our campaign hashtags
so we can reshare and
amplify your impact!

#StopTheClot
#StrongEnoughToAsk
#BCAM2026

**However you choose to engage, thank you for being
Strong Enough to Ask and helping others do the same.**



What is a Blood Clot?

A **blood clot** is a gel-like mass of blood that forms in a vein or artery. While clots play an important role in stopping bleeding after injury, they can also form when they aren't needed. These abnormal clots can block blood flow and lead to serious conditions such as deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE).

Types of Blood Clots

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a blood clot that forms in a deep vein, most often in the leg, but sometimes in the arm or other parts of the body. A DVT can block blood flow and may cause symptoms such as swelling, pain, or skin discoloration.

Pulmonary embolism (PE) occurs when a blood clot breaks loose and travels to the lungs, blocking blood flow, which can be life-threatening. Symptoms may include shortness of breath, chest pain, a rapid heartbeat, or feeling lightheaded.

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a term used to describe blood clots that form in the veins, including both DVT and PE.

DVT + PE = VTE



Why Blood Clots Are Dangerous

Blood clots are dangerous because they can block normal blood flow to vital organs. When left untreated, a blood clot (DVT) can break loose and travel to the lungs, resulting in a pulmonary embolism (PE), which is often fatal if not treated promptly.

The sooner a blood clot is recognized and treated, the better the outcome. Early diagnosis allows treatment to begin before a clot grows or travels to the lungs, reducing the risk of serious complications and long-term damage.

Because symptoms can be subtle or unexpected, delays in seeking care are common. Paying attention to warning signs, trusting your instincts, and speaking up quickly can make a lifesaving difference.

Why Timing Matters

Who Is at Risk of Blood Clots?

Blood clots can affect anyone — regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender, or activity level — but certain health conditions, life events, and situations can increase risk. Knowing your personal risk factors can help you recognize symptoms sooner and speak up when something doesn't feel right.



Common Risk Factors



Hospitalization & Surgery

Half of all blood clots occur during or within 3 months of a hospital stay or a surgical procedure.

[Learn more.](#)



Pregnancy & Postpartum

Women are 5X more likely to have a blood clot during pregnancy and up to an additional 3 months postpartum.

[Learn more.](#)



Cancer & Some Treatments

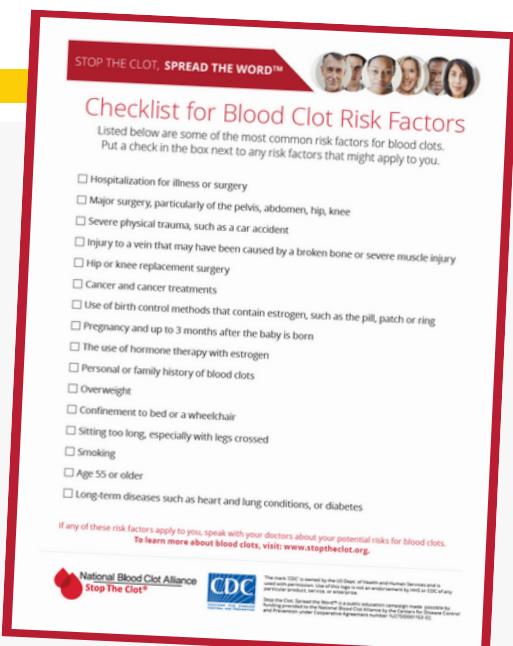
1 in 5 blood clots are due to cancer and some of its treatments and are a leading cause of death among cancer patients.

[Learn more.](#)

Other Common Risk Factors

- Family history of blood clots
- Age 55 or older
- Estrogen-based contraception or hormone therapy
- Immobility
- Injury or trauma
- Long-term diseases, such as heart conditions or diabetes
- Overweight
- Smoking

STOP THE CLOT, SPREAD THE WORD™



Checklist for Blood Clot Risk Factors

Listed below are some of the most common risk factors for blood clots. Put a check in the box next to any risk factors that might apply to you.

Hospitalization for illness or surgery
 Major surgery, particularly of the pelvis, abdomen, hip, knee
 Severe physical trauma, such as a car accident
 Injury to a vein that may have been caused by a broken bone or severe muscle injury
 Hip or knee replacement surgery
 Cancer and cancer treatments
 Use of birth control methods that contain estrogen, such as the pill, patch or ring
 Pregnancy and up to 3 months after the baby is born
 The use of hormone therapy with estrogen
 Personal or family history of blood clots
 Overweight
 Confinement to bed or a wheelchair
 Sitting too long, especially with legs crossed
 Smoking
 Age 55 or older
 Long-term diseases such as heart and lung conditions, or diabetes

If any of these risk factors apply to you, speak with your doctors about your potential risks for blood clots. To learn more about blood clots, visit: www.stoptheclot.org.

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[Click here](#) to download this Checklist for Blood Clot Risks.





Prevention Tips

- Know your individual risk factors.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms.
- Tell your doctor if you have risk factors for blood clots.
- Before any surgery or hospitalization, talk to your doctor about how to prevent clots.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible if you experience any symptoms.
- Know your family history and inform your doctor if you learn of any relatives who've had a blood clot.
- Get up and move! Stand up, walk around, and stretch your legs every two to three hours.
- Maintain a healthy weight and exercise as directed by your doctor.
- Don't smoke or take steps to quit smoking.



Questions to Ask Your Doctors

Asking about blood clot prevention is an important part of protecting your health. These questions can help guide conversations with your healthcare provider — especially during higher-risk periods such as hospitalization.

- Am I at risk for blood clots?
- Are there specific risk factors I should be aware of right now?
- What can I do to reduce my risk of blood clots?
- Will I need blood clot prevention during or after surgery or hospitalization?
- Do any of my medications increase my risk for blood clots?
- What signs and symptoms of a blood clot should I watch for?
- When should I call you and when should I go to the emergency room?
- If I'll be traveling or immobile for long periods, what precautions should I take?
- Should I wear compression stockings or take other preventive measures?



Blood Clot Signs & Symptoms

Common signs and symptoms of a DVT:

- Swelling, usually in one leg (or arm)
- Pain or tenderness not caused by injury
- Reddish or bluish skin discoloration
- Skin that is warm to the touch

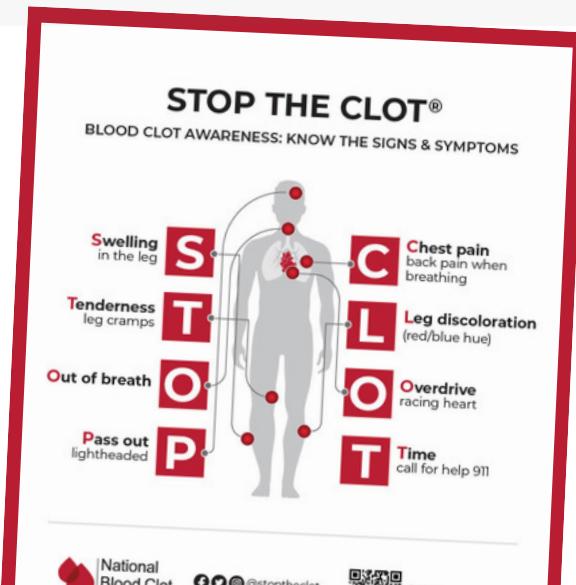
Contact your doctor as soon as possible if you have any of these DVT symptoms.

Common signs and symptoms of a PE:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain that's sharp
- Faster than normal or irregular heartbeat
- Unexplained cough, sometimes with blood
- Low blood pressure or lightheadedness

Call 9-1-1 immediately if you experience any of these PE symptoms.

[Click here](#) to download this free STOP the CLOT® acronym poster. You are welcome to print the poster and hang it in your hospital, office, or community.



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Blood clot awareness saves lives — but only when people act on what they know.

Being **Strong Enough to Ask** looks different for everyone, but it always starts with action.



Join the 100,000 Reasons Challenge and be part of a national movement to honor the 100,000 lives lost to blood clots each year. Run, walk, ride, or roll—while helping raise awareness and funds to prevent future tragedies. Let's make every step, every mile, and every moment count.

Learn More: bit.ly/100kReasons2026

Sign Up



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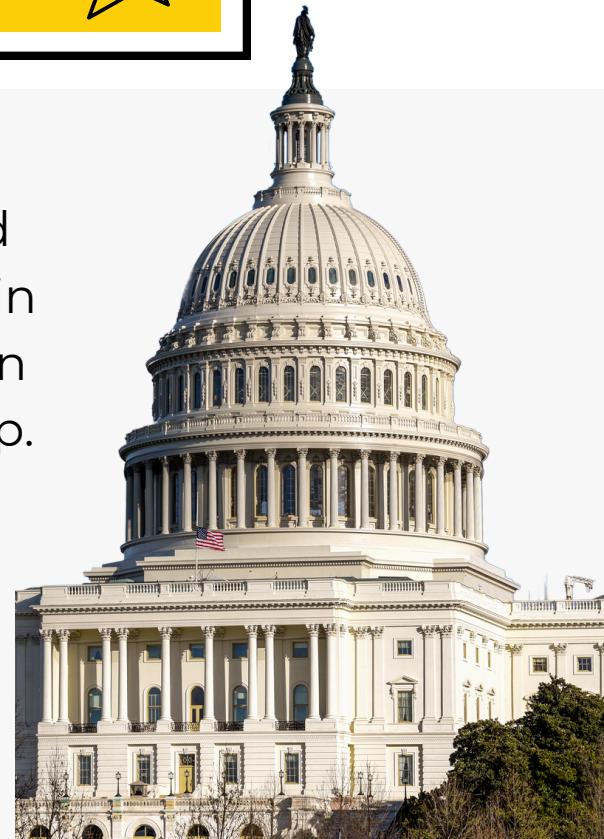
Your Voice Matters



Contact Your Congressional Reps

There is little federal funding for blood clot education and awareness efforts in the U.S. We are on a bipartisan mission to change that, and we need your help. We are urging Congress to unlock funding for education and awareness programs to reach more people with life-saving blood clot information.

Take Action: bit.ly/ClotAdvocate2026



Share a Blood Clot Story

Help to spread awareness by sharing your experience. Your story is your strength.

Submit: bit.ly/BloodClotStory

Help spread awareness and honor a loved one lost to blood clots by sharing their story.

Submit: bit.ly/BCAMTribute



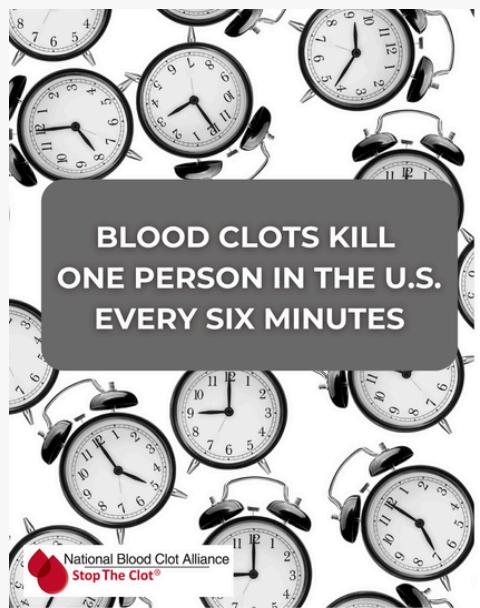
How do I tell people about Blood Clot Awareness Month?



SHARE

[Download graphics](#)

NBCA created graphics and messaging that you can share on social media, company newsletters, in person events, or any channel.



March is #BloodClotAwarenessMonth. Tragically, blood clots kill one person every six minutes in the U.S. and most of them are preventable with greater awareness and education. Learn more about the risks, signs, and symptoms of blood clots at stoptheclot.org.

#StopTheClot #BCAM2026
#StrongEnoughToAsk

Tag and follow @stoptheclot on social media for the most current resources and shareable posts.



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Shareable Statistics



Tag @StopTheClot on social media and use these hashtags:

#StopTheClot #StrongEnoughToAsk
#BCAM2026 #BloodClotAwarenessMonth



[Download graphics](#)



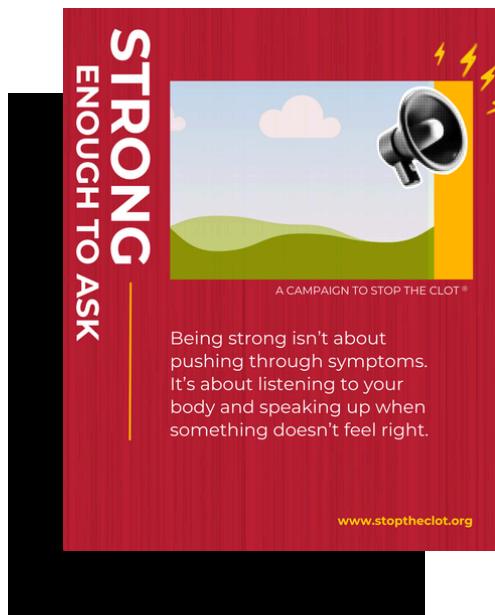
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Sample Posts

Strong Enough to Ask Post #1

Being strong isn't about pushing through symptoms. It's about listening to your body and speaking up when something doesn't feel right. This March, be Strong Enough to Ask. #StrongEnoughToAsk #StopTheClot #BCAM2026



Strong Enough to Ask Post #2

Being Strong Enough to Ask means listening to your body and speaking up when something doesn't feel right. For me, it looked like _____. This March, I'm sharing my story to help others recognize risk and ask questions sooner. #StrongEnoughToAsk #StopTheClot #BCAM2026

Download and
customize frame

Tag @StopTheClot on social media and use these hashtags:

#StopTheClot #BCAM2026
#StrongEnoughToAsk



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Sample Posts

Health Equity

Disparities in diagnosis and care make awareness—and advocacy—critical. Being strong enough to ask could mean asking for further testing, a second opinion, or simply being heard. Your voice matters.

Learn more: bit.ly/blackamericansrisk

DID YOU KNOW

Black individuals experience significantly higher rates of life-threatening blood clots—up to 60% higher than white individuals—due to a combination of medical risk factors, systemic inequities, and delayed diagnosis.



Cancer

Certain types of cancer, particularly ones affecting the pancreas, stomach, lungs, uterus, ovaries, kidneys, and blood cancers, increase the risk of blood clots. If you or a loved one is diagnosed with cancer, learn the signs and symptoms of blood clots and speak to your doctor about how to prevent them.

Learn more: bit.ly/clots-cancer



 **SHARE**

[Download graphics](#)

Tag @StopTheClot on social media and use these hashtags:

#StopTheClot #BCAM2026
#StrongEnoughToAsk



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Sample Posts



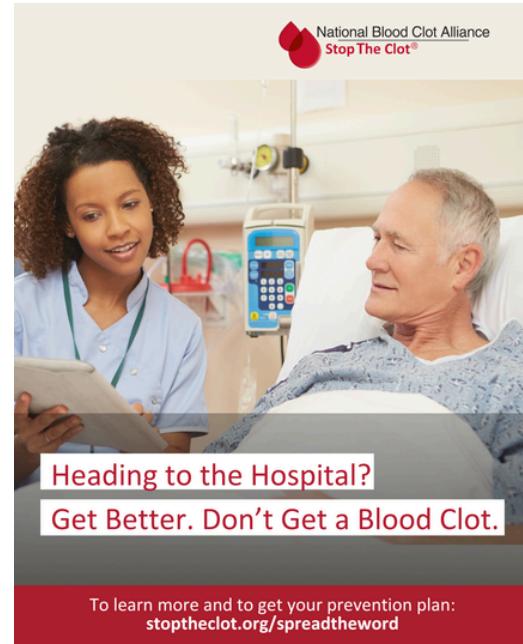
Women and Blood Clots

Hormones change. Life changes. Risk can change too. From contraception to menopause, certain health decisions may increase the risk of blood clots. Knowing your risk means you're better prepared to speak up and stay safe.

Risk Assessment: bit.ly/KnowYourClotRisk
#womenandbloodclots

Hospital-Associated Blood Clots

Heading to the Hospital?
Get Better. Don't Get a Blood Clot.
Blood clots are a leading cause of preventable hospital death in the United States, but they can be prevented. Make sure all of your doctors know your risk for blood clots and ask for a prevention plan. Learn more and get your prevention plan: bit.ly/HospPrevPlan



Tag @StopTheClot on social media and use these hashtags:

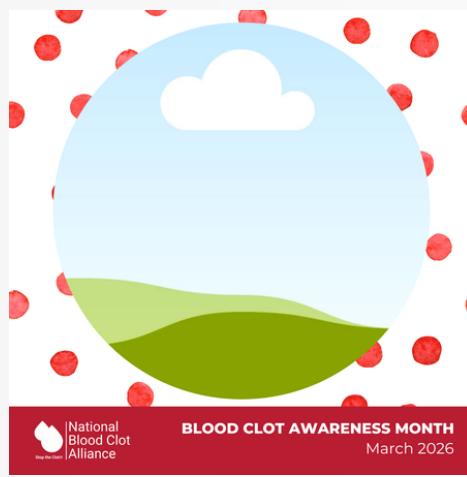
#StopTheClot #BCAM2025
#StrongEnoughToAsk



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Social Media Profile Frames



Follow the steps below for more information on creating your customized frame in Canva.

1. Click [Download Frames](#) to get the template.
2. Click “edit this design” in Canva.
3. Choose the design you want and drag your photo into the blank frame.
4. Save and upload to your social media profiles.

[Download frames](#)

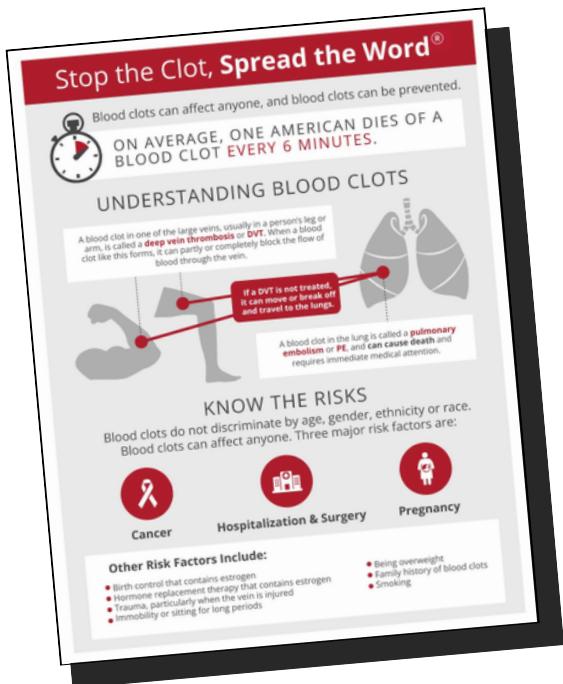


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Digital Resources

Having the right tools makes it easier to ask informed questions and take action. Use the resources below to learn more, share with others, or support conversations about blood clot prevention and awareness.



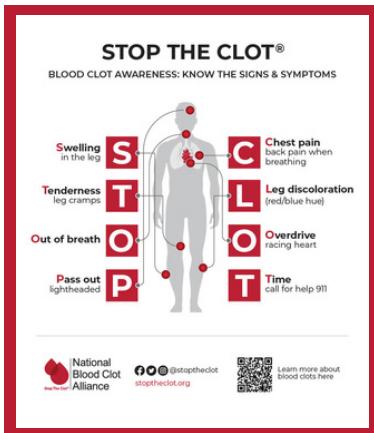
NBCA's **Stop the Clot, Spread the Word®** campaign has a variety of infographics and digital resources you can share with your community to help raise awareness.

Explore the resource library:

- General Awareness
- Hospitalization
- Pregnancy
- Cancer



Digital Resources



Stop the Clot Acronym

Share our Stop the Clot acronym to highlight the signs and symptoms of blood clots. This information can save your life or the life of someone you know. Download and print [here](#).

Taking a Breath Podcast

Listen to NBCA's [award-winning podcast](#) that shines a light on real-life experiences of blood clot survivors, with input from the medical community. Listen [here](#), or any major platform.



Patient Resource Center

Learn and share at NBCA's Patient Resource Center, including the [New Patient Guide](#), [PEP Talk library](#), [online support group](#), and more. Explore more patient resources [here](#).



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Clinical Resources

VTE eLearning Course

STOP THE CLOT® – WHAT EVERY HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL SHOULD KNOW is a self-paced, no-cost continuing education course. Learn more [here](#).



BCAM Webinar Series - Save the Dates

- March 4** Pediatric VTE
- March 11** Cancer and VTE
- March 18** Anticoagulant Recommendations
- March 25** VTE Centers of Excellence

2026

MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

VTE Centers of Excellence™

Elevating Patient and Community Care
A growing network of healthcare centers committed to redefining what VTE clinical excellence looks like. Learn more [here](#).



#ThinkVTE26



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Medical Disclaimer

The information in this toolkit is for awareness and education purposes only and should not be used as a substitution for treatment or advice from a practicing health care professional.





If you have any questions about this toolkit, or would like more information about blood clots or NBCA, please email us at info@stoptheclot.org.

Thank you for helping raise awareness this March, and being Strong Enough to Ask to help Stop the Clot®!

