

# Deep Vein Thrombosis Testing

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**Abbreviations**  
 ASH American Society of Hematology  
 DVT Deep vein thrombosis

**INDICATIONS FOR TESTING**  
 Symptoms of first episode of DVT<sup>a</sup> (eg, unilateral limb pain, redness, swelling, warmth, tenderness, edema)

**PERFORM**  
 Pretest probability assessment that is appropriate for the clinical situation (eg, [Wells' criteria for DVT](#))

Potential lower-extremity DVT      Potential upper-extremity DVT

Low risk      Intermediate risk<sup>b</sup>      High risk      Unlikely      Likely

**ORDER**  
 High-sensitivity D-dimer testing<sup>c</sup>

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 High-sensitivity D-dimer testing<sup>c</sup>

Either D-dimer testing or imaging studies may be appropriate for initial assessment

Negative

Positive

Perform appropriate imaging studies<sup>d</sup>

Negative

Positive

Perform appropriate imaging studies<sup>d</sup>

DVT ruled out

Negative

Positive

DVT confirmed

DVT ruled out

Negative

Positive

DVT confirmed

<sup>a</sup>In cases of suspected **recurrent** lower-extremity DVT, a D-dimer test should be the initial test for those with an **unlikely** pretest probability assessment, and imaging should be the initial test for those with a **likely** pretest probably assessment.  
<sup>b</sup>High-sensitivity D-dimer testing may be considered for some intermediate-risk patients if prevalence is estimated at <15%. If D-dimer testing is performed and positive, proceed to imaging studies.  
<sup>c</sup>If D-dimer testing is not available in a timely manner or if the patient has another underlying condition that would cause a baseline elevation of D-dimer, proceed directly to imaging studies.  
<sup>d</sup>For the specific recommended imaging studies, see the [ASH 2018 Guidelines for Management of Venous Thromboembolism: Diagnosis of Venous Thromboembolism](#).

**Reference**  
 Lim W, Le Gal G, Bates SM, et al. [American Society of Hematology 2018 guidelines for management of venous thromboembolism: diagnosis of venous thromboembolism](#). *Blood Adv.* 2018;2(22):3226-3256.