



Pulmonary Embolism

A pulmonary embolism (EM buh liz um) is a blood clot in the large blood vessels in the lungs. Blood flow to the lungs can be totally blocked or partially blocked. You may hear a pulmonary embolism referred to as a “PE.”

Causes

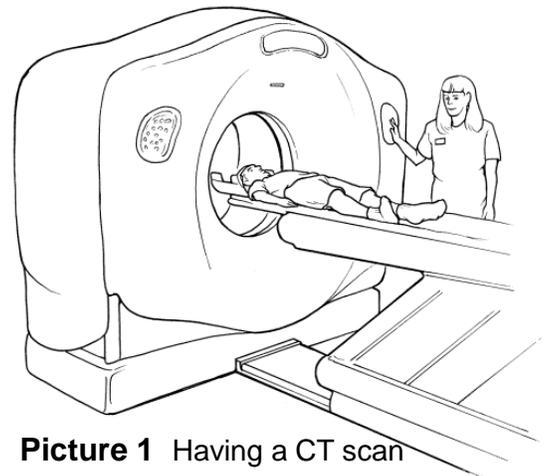
Pulmonary embolisms are caused by blood clots that can develop from:

- Staying in one position for a long time.
- Certain illnesses, such as cancer and diabetes.
- Hereditary factors.

Signs and symptoms

Your child may have one or more of the following:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Fast breathing
- Bluish color of the fingers and lips
- Coughing up blood



Picture 1 Having a CT scan

Diagnosis

Certain radiology tests can be done to tell if your child has a pulmonary embolism. The tests are not painful. Your child will be awake during the tests. These tests include:

- CT scan (Picture 1)
- Ventilation/Perfusion or “VQ” scan

Treatment

Your child's doctor will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general treatment options are listed below:

- Blood thinning medicine
- Special "Clot-Busting" medicines
- IVC filters - a special device that helps prevent blood clots from reaching the lungs

How to prevent a pulmonary embolism

It is important to stop blood clots from forming. Blood clots can lead to pulmonary embolism.

Some things that can prevent blood clots are:

- Not smoking
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Not sitting for long periods of time

Follow-up

Your child will see a Hematology doctor in the outpatient clinic soon after discharge. Additional laboratory and radiology tests may be needed.

When to call the doctor

Call your child's doctor right away if your child has any of the following:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Bluish color of fingers or lips
- Bleeding or coughing up blood

Call your child's doctor at _____ during regular clinic hours for:

- Appointments
- Medicine refills
- Questions or concerns

Be sure to call your child's doctor's office at _____ if you cannot keep an appointment.