

Chapter 8



COMMON PERIPHERAL VASCULAR PATHOLOGIES IN PREGNANCY

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DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS

Introduction and Epidemiology

Pregnancy and the postpartum period are well-defined risk factors for venous thromboembolism (VTE), specifically pulmonary embolism (PE) resulting from deep venous thrombosis (DVT), with an incidence of 1 in 1600.^(1,2) Generally, while DVT is more common in the antenatal period, PE is more common in the postnatal period.⁽³⁾

In a population-based cohort study spanning more than 30 years, the overall incidence of VTE was found to be 200 per 100,000 women, and DVT was found to be three times more common than PE.⁽⁴⁾ Considering the VTE-related mortality rate (1 per 100 000), VTE is the third leading cause of death in developed countries.⁽⁵⁾

The risk of VTE is approximately 5-fold higher in pregnant women than in non-pregnant women of the same age, and up to 20-fold higher in the postpartum period.⁽⁴⁾ Furthermore, the increased risk in the postpartum period extends up to 12 weeks, with the highest risk in the first 6 weeks after delivery and a smaller but still significantly elevated risk in the 7- to 12-week postpartum period compared with the risk 1 year after completion of pregnancy.⁽⁶⁾

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