What can happen if deep vein thrombosis is not treated?

The most concerning event is when a clot detaches from the site in the legs or arms where it was formed and travels through the blood stream. If it moves through the heart to the lungs, it can block an artery supplying blood to the lungs. This condition is called pulmonary embolism. You should call your physician immediately if you

- Have unexplained shortness of breath
- Have pain or discomfort in your chest
- Are lightheaded or dizzy
- Have a rapid pulse
- Are coughing up blood

Long-term swelling, pain and potentially ulcers (sores) in the leg. This is a condition known as the "post thrombotic syndrome."

For some people with smaller clots, there may be no long-term problems if the body can absorb the blood clot on its own.