Avoiding Air Travel Thrombosis (ATT):

ATT symptoms to watch for up to 30 days after air travel.

Leg symptoms, during or after flight:
• Swelling in one lower leg. (A little swelling in both legs is normal in flight.)
• Cramp or tenderness in one lower leg.
• Swelling or bruising behind knee.

Chest symptoms usually appear 2-4 days or more after the initial clot in the calf, which you may not have noticed:
• Shortness of breath
• Rapid breathing, panting
• Chest pain radiating to the shoulder
• Fever
• Coughing up blood
• Fainting (often the first sign, especially in older people)

Tell the doctor that you have flown recently and that you suspect a blood clot.

Tips to avoid misdiagnosis:
Most victims fail to get correct diagnosis and treatment until after the clot has done permanent damage. To avoid this:

If you have leg symptoms but the doctor tells you it is only a strained muscle, insist on an ultrasound leg scan. Without it, the chance of correct diagnosis is only 50/50. If you have to pay for it yourself, the cost is around $150, not much if it helps avoid permanent damage to the veins and chronic phlebitis.

If you have chest symptoms but the doctor tells you it is a cold, pneumonia, heartburn, or other conditions, ask for a blood oxygen test. A small device called a pulse oximeter is clipped to your finger and measures blood oxygen without breaking the skin. If the reading is below 80 and there is no reason (such as emphysema) for low oxygen, the doctor will then want to do a ventilation/perfusion test, which will confirm or rule out PE.

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