Recognising the psychological impact of VTE

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Prifysgol Abertawe
Prevalence of the problem...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 month (n = 53)</th>
<th>6 months (n = 37)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Anxiety &amp; Depression scale</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES (PTSD): Clinically relevant</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical diagnosis</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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I can feel that feeling as though it was yesterday. Especially that bit when I was on the floor and everything was pitch black and I just wanted to shout out or move and I just couldn’t. I couldn’t [tearful]. Awful. But that to me is still like it is. Now I’m talking about it now, it’s like it happened yesterday.
“Missed or mis-diagnosis

“. It wasn’t that bad on the Friday when I first went into hospital. It wasn’t half as bad as it was on the Monday you know? It was a massive difference between them 3 days and if they had given me that klexane... I wouldn’t have gone through that. And I’m adamant my leg wouldn’t be like it was today. Because that’s the only reason I got this [PTS] is because the damage got so big. And it frustrates me cos they did that to me”.

Female, 25y
Living with fears of recurrence

It does change you, and your outlook is different. You’ve still got at the back of your mind, the fear of ‘that’.

Male, 68y
“Post thrombotic panic”

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<th>PHYSICAL REMINDERS</th>
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<td>Taking medication</td>
<td>Breathlessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symptoms</td>
<td>Tightness in chest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-thrombotic syndrome</td>
<td>Pain in leg /chest</td>
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<td>Auditory / visual reminder (e.g. siren)</td>
<td>Fatigue</td>
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EMOTIONAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

- Panic
- Fears of reoccurrence
- Reminders of VTE
- Fears for the future
- Uncertainty
- Health anxiety
- Anger (missed diagnosis)
- Reassurance seeking / avoidant coping
- Loss (role, occupation)

HYPERVIGILANCE TO...

TRIGGERS
“Post thrombotic panic”

**PHYSICAL REMINDERS**
- Taking medication
- Symptoms
- Post-thrombotic syndrome

**PHYSICAL SENSATIONS**
- Breathlessness
- Tightness in chest
- Pain in leg / chest
- Fatigue

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**REGARDLESS OF ILLNESS SEVERITY**
“Panic or PE?”
Symptoms of Anxiety

- headaches
- shortness of breath
- shooting pains in the face
- chest pain
- upset stomach / nausea
- numbness and tingling
- inability to rest
- feeling like you’re going crazy
- pulsing in ears
- neck tension
- heart palpitations
- electric shock feeling
- burning skin
- sleep problems
- weakness in legs
- fear of impending doom
“Post thrombotic panic”

**PHYSICAL REMINDERS**
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**HYPERVIGILANCE TO...**
- Wider generalized worries

**TRIGGERS**
- Wider generalized worries
• Worries about future health
• Thoughts about the VTE itself
• Don’t want to be a burden
• Worries about medication
• Panic about symptoms
• Feeling angry
How can we unpack the bag

Know that this is normal!
Share (talk, write, online)
Exercise (within your means)
Use resources available to you

Stuck in a rut?

Activate Your Life classes are free lectures that we run in your community.

Everyone has emotional issues. Sometimes these just take the edge off life. But some can have devastating effects on our lives. Emotional issues can include anxiety, depression, stress, worry, lack of motivation, low self-confidence and more. Many people also suffer from physical health problems that can be painful and/or disabling.

ACTivate Your Life is a new and exciting course designed by Consultant Clinical Psychologist Professor Neil Frude here in Wales. ACTivate Your Life is a four session taught course that aims to teach people about stress and suffering caused by emotional issues, like worry, or chronic pain. With messages such as "give yourself a break" and "feel the fear and do it anyway", ACTivate Your Life offers a slightly different approach to more conventional methods of dealing with emotional and physical problems.

Classes are based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and Mindfulness based practices. These psychological approaches teach people how to reduce suffering by accepting the things in life we cannot control and committing ourselves to the things we really care about. Sessions run for approximately 2 hours, once a week, with a break half way through the session. The classes are supported by PowerPoint presentations, Home Activities and Handout sheets. To take a look at these, please visit our Resources page.
LIFE CHANGING EVENT
Thankyou

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