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Commentary

# Recent Advances in the Management of Deep Vein Thrombosis and Post-Thrombotic Syndrome Exploring the Role of New Therapies and Techniques

**Isabella Rossi***

*Department of Vascular Surgery, Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, University of Milan, Italy, Milan, Italy*

## DESCRIPTION

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) is a serious condition that occurs when a blood clot forms in one of the deep veins, typically in the legs. If left untreated, DVT can lead to life-threatening complications, Including Pulmonary Embolism (PE), where the clot travels to the lungs. In addition to the immediate risks posed by DVT, many patients go on to develop Post-Thrombotic Syndrome (PTS), a long-term complication characterized by chronic pain, swelling and ulceration in the affected leg. Effective management of DVT and PTS has evolved significantly in recent years, incorporating new treatment modalities, improved diagnostic techniques and a focus on early intervention and prevention.

The management of DVT begins with accurate and early diagnosis. Advances in diagnostic imaging, particularly the use of ultrasound, have revolutionized the ability to detect DVT with greater precision and efficiency. Ultrasound remains the gold standard for diagnosing DVT because it is non-invasive, widely available and provides real-time images of the venous system. For cases where the diagnosis is uncertain or in patients with contraindications to ultrasound, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Computed Tomography Venography (CTV) may be used to offer more detailed assessments of the clot and its extent.

Risk stratification is another critical step in the management of DVT. The Wells score, a clinical prediction rule, helps to assess the probability of DVT based on clinical signs, symptoms and risk factors. This tool assists healthcare providers in determining whether further diagnostic testing is needed. Early identification of high-risk patients-those who are immobile, post-surgery, or have a history of DVT can lead to more aggressive treatment strategies aimed at preventing clot propagation and minimizing complications.The cornerstone of DVT treatment remains anticoagulation therapy, which aims to prevent the clot from growing, reduce the risk of PE and prevent further thrombus formation. Historically, heparin and warfarin were the mainstays of treatment. However, newer Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOACs), such as rivaroxaban, apixaban and dabigatran, have emerged as highly effective alternatives. DOACs offer several advantages over traditional therapies, including fixed dosing, fewer dietary restrictions and a lower need for regular monitoring. Their ease of use and lower risk of bleeding complications have made them the preferred choice for many clinicians.

Another evolving technique in the management of DVT is venous stenting. This procedure involves inserting a stent into a vein to keep it open, often after clot removal or in cases where a venous obstruction has caused persistent symptoms. Venous stenting has been particularly useful for patients with iliac vein compression syndrome or those with post-thrombotic occlusion.

While anticoagulation and interventional techniques focus on treating the acute phase of DVT, post-thrombotic syndrome is a long-term consequence that requires ongoing management. PTS occurs in a significant proportion of DVT patients, particularly those with inadequate early treatment or recurrent clots. Symptoms of PTS include persistent pain, heaviness, swelling and in more severe cases, leg ulcers and skin discoloration.

The management of PTS focuses on improving the patient's quality of life and preventing further complications. Compression therapy remains the mainstay of treatment for PTS. Compression stockings or bandages are used to improve venous return, reduce swelling and alleviate pain. Studies have consistently shown that compression therapy can significantly reduce the severity of symptoms and prevent the progression of PTS. In some cases, sclerotherapy may be considered for patients with superficial veins that are contributing to PTS symptoms. Sclerotherapy involves injecting a solution into the affected veins, causing them to close and preventing further blood flow. This can provide relief for patients with varicosities or superficial venous insufficiency associated with PTS.

Additionally, surgical interventions, such as ambulatory phlebectomy or venous bypass surgery, may be necessary for severe cases where conservative measures fail to provide adequate relief. These procedures aim to remove or bypass obstructed veins, improving circulation and reducing symptoms.The management of DVT and PTS continues to evolve with the development of new therapies and techniques. Gene therapy

**Correspondence to:** Isabella Rossi, Department of Vascular Surgery, Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, University of Milan, Italy, Milan, Italy, E-mail: isabella.rossi@unimi.it

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and cell-based treatments, such as stem cell therapy, are being explored for their potential to repair damaged veins and improve healing. Additionally, advances in biomarker research may provide better tools for predicting who is at risk for developing PTS and for monitoring treatment efficacy.Another promising area of research is the development of novel anticoagulants with fewer side effects and a reduced need for monitoring. These drugs aim to improve patient compliance, reduce bleeding risks and enhance the overall management of DVT and its complications.

## CONCLUSION

The management of deep vein thrombosis and post-thrombotic syndrome has come a long way with the advent of newer, more effective treatment options. From advanced diagnostic techniques to minimally invasive interventions and improved anticoagulation therapies, modern strategies have significantly improved outcomes for patients with DVT. As research continues to advance, there is hope for even more effective treatments that will further enhance the quality of life for individuals affected by these conditions. Early diagnosis, timely intervention and personalized treatment plans remain essential to optimizing outcomes and preventing long-term complications.