

**DVT Awareness In Motion - Bonnie Bernstein Script**

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Hi, my name is Bonnie Bernstein. As someone who is experienced a DVT, I'm so thrilled to be able to work with the Coalition to Prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis.

For those of you who've gone through a life-threatening circumstance, you know as well as I do that every day after the ordeal is precious and that is why I've teamed up with the Coalition and Melanie Bloom on the Coalition's national spokesperson platform. We believe now more than ever in the importance of educating people about this potentially life-threatening condition.

In the fall of 2006, I was working an extraordinarily hectic schedule. I was covering college football for ABC on Saturdays and then flying to another city for Sunday Night Baseball on ESPN. I was trying as best as I could to maintain my active lifestyle. I was working out, I was eating well, I don't smoke—not the typical candidate for a serious medical condition.

And suddenly I started getting pain in my upper leg, initially I thought it was just a muscle pull, but it turned out to be something much more serious. After a week, my physical therapist urged me to get some tests done. And the diagnosis: a DVT. By that time, I was short of breath, and I had blood clots in my lungs, a complication known as pulmonary embolism, or PE. So I was immediately admitted to the hospital hooked up to an IV and given medicine to avoid further complications from DVT.

My doctor was very clear about what could have happened had my situation not been diagnosed when it was. I would have been one of the statistics. Today, I make sure to follow all of my doctor's recommendations because I will never forget what it was like to go from a normal, happy, jet-setting lifestyle to a cold, dark hospital room, so close to death.

DVT can happen to anyone and I'm proof of that. So the more you know about DVT and its risk factors, the more effectively you can communicate what you are experiencing, and the more likely it is that you'll then be able to get the help you need as soon as possible.

Basically, a DVT is a blood clot that forms inside a deep vein, most often in the lower leg. Once formed, a blood clot or fragment of a clot can break off and may cause severe complications, such as a pulmonary embolism, or PE – and even death if it's not diagnosed and treated appropriately. I was lucky.

Up to 2 million Americans suffer from deep-vein thrombosis annually and approximately 300,000 Americans die each year from PE. The most astonishing statistic is that complications from DVT kill more Americans than breast cancer and AIDS combined.

I am a perfect example that a DVT can occur in almost anyone. But, certain people may be at increased risk for developing a DVT blood clot. I had three risk factors. I had a family history of blood clots – I wasn't even aware of, I was on birth control and I had been flying three or four days a week covering games.

It's important to remember that extended periods of immobility, whether it's a long plane ride, a train ride or a car ride or even sitting at your desk for hours on end could increase your risk for a

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DVT particularly if you have other risk factors. Some of those other risk factors could include being over 40, being overweight, having recent surgery, or being hospitalized.

As I become more deeply involved with the Coalition, I've taken part in our trip to Capitol Hill, where Melanie, Coalition physician Dr. Geno Merli, and I have met with policy-makers to discuss the importance of raising awareness about DVT. For me this work is so rewarding, because I know that people everywhere could be impacted by our efforts.

Now initially, the Coalition's focus was on sharing basic information about DVT. But our mission has grown. The Coalition now offers an encouraging message of inspiration, letting those of you who have been diagnosed with DVT know you don't have to face it alone.

I'm honored to help deliver that message, especially through our educational program, "DVT Awareness In Motion." And what I love about the program is that it goes beyond general DVT education regarding signs and symptoms; we emphasize the importance of preventative care through staying mobile, no matter where you are.

For example, the program focuses on reducing DVT risk through movement in settings where your mobility is often restricted: in hospitals, at the office, in assisted living facilities, and during travel. These are places where we know you may find yourself and – more importantly – times when you need to keep the blood flowing!

As a survivor and through personal experience, I know there are many things people can do besides keeping mobile to help reduce the risk for DVT, such as avoiding smoking and staying hydrated. So, remember, movement is only one way to help reduce DVT risk. Some patients may require compression socks or medications such as anticoagulants. Dr. Merli will focus more on the additional risk factors in his discussion within this program or to view a complete list of ways to identify your risk, visit [www.preventdvt.org](http://www.preventdvt.org) or talk to your healthcare professional.

So did this whole ordeal scare me going through this ordeal? You bet it did. Was it a life lesson learned? Absolutely. But I am here today to tell you: there is life after DVT. And because of the good work of the Coalition to Prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis, and dedicated healthcare professionals like Dr. Merli, more people may be like me. But we all need to do our part.

Thank you so much for listening and I encourage you to listen to Dr. Merli, and Melanie Bloom, and Mary Ann Wilson. Mary Ann will be taking you through the various movements that can keep you moving and help you avoid a DVT!

***[On screen disclaimer]*** Ambulation/movement is only one way to help reduce DVT risk. Some patients may require compression socks or medications such as anticoagulants – please talk to your healthcare professional. Please be aware that DVT events may occur after you begin to become mobile again.

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