

Mayo Clinic Minute

Ins and outs of blood clot filters

Video	Audio
Vivien Williams	An IVC filter is a device designed to block blood clots in a vein — usually in the leg — from migrating to the lung. It's a situation that can be life-threatening.
Erica Knavel Koepsel, M.D. Interventional radiology Mayo Clinic	"People who tend to get DVT, or blood clots in their lower extremities, are people who may have had recent surgery, people who may have malignancy or cancer, or other sorts of disease that would make them relatively immobile."
Vivien Williams	Dr. Erica Knavel Koepsel says people with blood clotting disorders are also at risk.
Vivien Williams	But, she says, they are learning that IVC filters are not perfect, and some should be removed when no longer needed.
Erica Knavel Koepsel, M.D.	"The most common problems we see are that the filters themselves can fracture, the pieces can migrate or the filter itself can migrate. Also, the filter, because it's a foreign body, can cause an extensive scar formation reaction in the inferior vena cava, which leads to narrowing of the inferior vena cava and sometimes even occlusion or total blockage."
Vivien Williams	She recommends anyone with an IVC filter should talk to their health care provider about the risks and benefits of the device.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.