IN A NUTSHELL

The knowledge platform for general practitioners

Wells’ Criteria for Deep Vein Thrombosis

The Wells’ Criteria for deep vein thrombosis (DVT) can be used to estimate the probability of DVT based on the patient history and clinical criteria. This provides a recommendation for further diagnostics depending on the pre-test probability.

Active cancer
Treatment within the last 6 months or palliative therapy
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Paralysis, paresis, recent immobilization of lower extremities
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Bedridden (? 3 days) or major surgery in the last 12 weeks
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Localized pain or induration along the deep venous system
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Whole leg swollen
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Calf swelling (? 3 cm/1.2 inch) in a side by side comparison
measured 10 cm/3.9 inch below the tibial tuberosity
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Pitting edema on the symptomatic leg
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Superficial (non-varicose) collateral veins
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Previously documented deep vein thrombosis
○ No ○ Yes (+1)
Alternative diagnosis to deep vein thrombosis as likely or more likely
○ No ○ Yes (-2)

Wells’ Criteria for Deep Vein Thrombosis:

Recommendation:

Interpretation

Score	Classification and recommendation
? 1	**Deep vein thrombosis unlikely** Recommendation: perform D-dimer test - If D-dimer is negative, deep vein thrombosis can be excluded. - If D-dimer is positive, duplex sonography should be performed to exclude deep vein thrombosis.
? 2	**Deep vein thrombosis likely** Recommendation: Duplex sonography should be performed to exclude deep vein thrombosis.

References

1. Wells PS, Anderson DR, Rodger M et al. Evaluation of D-dimer in the diagnosis of suspected deep-vein thrombosis. N Engl J Med 2003; 349: 1227-1235