

## **Knowledge of and attitude towards Venous Thromboembolism among professional drivers in Saudi Arabia**

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Evidence suggests that professional drivers have an elevated risk for venous thromboembolism (VTE), which they should be aware of since it is life-threatening yet preventable. However, awareness of VTE among this population has not been assessed before in the Middle East. The study aim was to assess the awareness about VTE risk, presentation and complications as well as the attitudes towards VTE preventive measures among professional drivers in the Al-Qassim region, Saudi Arabia.

We used a validated VTE awareness questionnaire to interview 324 professional drivers in their native languages from 7 major transportation companies during February-March 2020. Knowledge about VTE was the lowest compared to other medical conditions. Less than a third (31.8%) of the drivers were aware of VTE conditions. Only 15.7% of the drivers who were aware of VTE correctly identified all four deep vein thrombosis symptoms. Similarly, 7.4% drivers correctly identified all five pulmonary embolism symptoms. Nearly 70% of the drivers believed walking/leg stretching could prevent a VTE event. However, a large proportion believed in practices that were unrelated to VTE. To conclude, our study findings demonstrated that professional drivers had low awareness of VTE as a health condition and of their risk for it. Health promotion campaigns are urgently needed to raise awareness and to promote healthy behaviors such as regular rest periods among this high-risk group.