

HEALTH AWARENESS

The Pain In Her Leg Wasn't "All In Her Head" *One Woman's Struggle with Deep Vein Thrombosis*

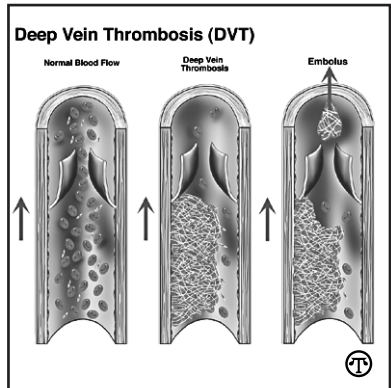
(NAPSA)—Doctor after doctor told Gloria Wong, "There's nothing wrong, it's all in your head."

"They just didn't believe that I was in so much pain that I could not walk," said Mrs. Wong. "I was being treated with a blood thinner for deep vein thrombosis, a blood clot in my leg. My bloodwork looked good, so they discharged me from the hospital."

Wong visited several doctors and the emergency room twice complaining of debilitating leg pain, but it wasn't until she finally found an Interventional Radiologist that she received the right treatment. Interventional Radiologists are doctors who specialize in minimally invasive, targeted treatments performed using x-ray imaging guidance.

"Blood thinners prevent the formation of new clots and protect a patient from a potentially life-threatening pulmonary embolism, but contrary to popular belief, they do not dissolve the existing clot," said Dr. Ziv Haskal, an Interventional Radiologist at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia. "Doctors usually let the body take care of the clot. Although many clots will eventually dissolve on their own, during this time the vein can become permanently damaged, causing symptoms known as post-thrombotic syndrome."

Wong's Interventional Radiologist performed a venogram, an image of the inside of her vein, that showed the clot in her leg was not going away on its own. Using his skill in imaging to deliver clot-



Left untreated, a blood clot can lead to permanent damage.

busting drugs directly to the site, Dr. Haskal cleared the clot—getting Wong back on her feet. "Since my treatment, I've been able to hike and bike and do all my normal activities," said Wong.

Once thought to be a rare occurrence after Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), it's now known that up to 80 percent of patients will have degrees of post-thrombotic syndrome within just months of developing DVT. It's still important to go to the emergency room because initial treatment with blood thinners can prevent pulmonary embolism. If symptoms continue—leg pain, leg fatigue, swelling, or discoloration—consult an Interventional Radiologist.

To find out more, or to find an Interventional Radiologist near you, visit the patients and public section of the Society of Interventional Radiology's Web site at www.SIRweb.org.