

## Melanie Bloom

Melanie Bloom's husband, David, was an NBC correspondent embedded with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division in Iraq when he suddenly collapsed and died from massive pulmonary embolism (PE). That tragedy was Melanie's rude awakening to the realities of PE and deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a condition that affects approximately 2,000,000 Americans every year. She, like most Americans, had never heard of the "silent killer" that took her husband's life.

Inspired by the enormous outpouring of support for her personal loss, Melanie pledged to increase awareness of PE and DVT by working with the Coalition to Prevent DVT, a group of organizations committed to educating the public and healthcare community about DVT. The Coalition's mission is:

To reduce the immediate and long-term dangers of DVT and PE, which together comprise one of the nation's leading causes of death. The Coalition will educate the public, healthcare professionals, and policy-makers about risk factors, symptoms, and signs associated with DVT, as well as identify evidence-based measures to prevent morbidity and mortality from DVT and PE.

The Coalition's website is: [www.preventdvt.org](http://www.preventdvt.org).

As the Coalition's patient advocate, Melanie educates audiences of healthcare professionals, consumers, and members of the media to be alert to the risk factors and symptoms of DVT, which can strike even healthy adults seemingly at random. Common risk factors include restricted mobility, major surgery, cancer, and certain heart or respiratory diseases. Symptoms of DVT include pain, swelling, tenderness, discoloration, or redness of the affected area, and skin that is warm to the touch.

To date, the Coalition's message has reached millions of people across the country. Melanie has appeared on the *Today Show*, *Access Hollywood*, CNN's *American Morning*, the *Jane Pauley Show*, and *Larry King Live*. She shared her story in the Coalition to Prevent DVT's public service announcement that continues to air nationally, and she has been featured in both *Ladies Home Journal* and the 2005 Oscar issue of *People* magazine. In March 2005, Melanie and the Coalition drew members of Congress, staffers, and members of the media to a Capitol Hill celebration of a Senate Resolution officially declaring March as DVT Awareness Month. Melanie represented the Coalition at major medical meetings for the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) and Vascular InterVentional Advances (VIVA), spoke at a DVT lecture series at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, and participated in a film shoot and Web cast for internal distribution at the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA). At every event, Melanie recounts her loss to emphasize the importance of increased awareness of DVT and to encourage the widespread implementation of prophylaxis measures.

Throughout 2006, Melanie will continue working with the Coalition, telling her story and encouraging other patients to share their experiences with DVT. Together

with the Coalition, she will help reach policy leaders and a wider audience of healthcare professionals.

Melanie welcomes the opportunity to speak at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School and to share her story, as she seeks to raise awareness of DVT. She is especially pleased to be the inaugural speaker of this new Continuing Education course directed by Arthur A. Sasahara, MD: "Proactive Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis: Multidisciplinary Prevention of Pulmonary Embolism and Deep Vein Thrombosis."