

How to Prevent Clots

Things You Can Do To Prevent Clots

- Stay active with regular exercise
- Stay well-hydrated
- Avoid obesity
- Don't smoke
- Don't take the birth control pill
- On long trips move around, stretch frequently, and drink plenty of fluids
- Make sure any doctor who treats you know you have a clotting risk
- If hospitalized and/or immobile for a prolonged period, anticoagulation may be beneficial
- Wear a compression stocking, especially on long trips or when your limb is feeling more swollen
- Elevate your limb when you are sitting for long periods

In-Flight Fitness

Don't let cramped conditions put you at risk of DVT. Keep your body moving, even when travelling by airplane. Take proper precautions to reduce the risk of "Economy Class Syndrome". These are some simple exercises you can do in your seat.

Seated Exercises:

- **Ankle Circle** – Lift your feet off the floor and twirl your feet as if you're drawing circles with your toes. Continue this for 15 seconds then reverse direction. Repeat as desired.
- **Foot Pumps** – Keep your heels on the floor and lift the front of your feet toward you as high as possible. Hold for a second or two, then flatten your feet and lift your heels as high as possible, keeping the balls of your feet on the floor. Continue for 30 seconds, and repeat as desired.
- **Knee Lifts** – Keeping your leg bent, lift your knee up to your chest. Bring back to normal position and repeat with your other leg. Repeat 20-30 times for each leg.
- **Shoulder Roll** – Lift your shoulders upward, then pull them backward, downward and forward, creating a gentle circular motion. Continue for 30 seconds. Then reverse direction if desired.
- **Arm Curl** – Start with arms on chair rests, bent at a 90° angle. Raise one hand up to your chest and back down. Alternate hand and continue for 30 seconds. Repeat as desired.

Seated Stretches:

- **Knee to Chest** – With both hands clasped around your right knee, bend forward slightly and pull your knee to your chest. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds then slowly let your knee down. Repeat the same stretch with your left knee. Perform 10 stretches for each leg.
- **Forward Flex** – Keep both feet on the floor and slowly bend forward, reaching for your ankles. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds and slowly return to a normal seated position.
- **Overhead Stretch** – Raise both hands straight up over your head. Use one hand to grab the wrist of the opposite hand and gently pull to one side. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat with the other arm.
- **Shoulder Stretch** – Bring your right hand over your left shoulder. Then place your left hand behind your right elbow and gently pull your elbow toward your body. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds and repeat with the other arm.
- **Neck Roll** – Relax your neck and shoulders. Then drop your right ear to your right shoulder and gently roll your head forward and to the other side, holding each position for about 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

General Tips:

- Try to keep your feet elevated by using the leg rests at the highest elevation. Rest your feet on your carry-on luggage if necessary.
- If you have an opportunity to move around the cabin, walk to the restroom and back.
- Drink plenty of fluids, preferably water, to avoid dehydration.
- Walk for 30 minutes before boarding the plane.