



HEALTH AWARENESS

Going The Distance: Keep Your Blood Flowing Safely During Travel

(NAPSA)—Cabin fever will have travelers hitting the road, airports and train stations this year. But most people would agree that spending hours cramped in a seat to get to your destination is not the highlight of vacation. Beyond this irritation, there's a more serious condition that can affect travelers.

Long periods of time spent sitting idly can increase your risk of developing blood clots in the legs, a condition known as deep-vein thrombosis (DVT).

This condition can become fatal if the clot travels from the leg to the lung. When this happens, it is called pulmonary embolism (PE).

Simple and short exercises while in route may decrease your chances of developing a serious medical complication.

Experts advise taking breaks every few hours to walk. Walking increases the circulation in your legs. If you can't get up to walk, flex your feet and ankles often and periodically change your body position.

Following are do's and don'ts to keep you and your fellow travelers' blood flowing:

Do:

- Get up and walk every few hours to increase the circulation in your legs. Research shows that sitting still for as little as two to three hours can put you at risk.

- While sitting, flex your feet and ankles, stretch calf muscles



Simple and short exercises done while traveling can help prevent a potentially fatal condition known as deep-vein thrombosis.

often and change your body position periodically.

- Drink plenty of fluids, but steer clear of alcohol and caffeinated beverages, which can increase your risk.

- Eat lightly before traveling—this increases the oxygen level in your blood and promotes circulation.

- If you know you are at risk for blood clots, talk to your doctor.

Don't:

- Wear socks with very tight elastic bands at the top or other tight clothing.

- Sit with your legs crossed for long periods of time.

- Drink large amounts of alcohol and caffeinated beverages.

Following these tips may help minimize travel stress so that you can enjoy your getaway with loved ones.

Safe travels!

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Sources: American Heart Association; Lifespan; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; MedicineNet.com.