

## **Exercise After Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)**

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After five days of initial treatment for a deep vein thrombosis (DVT), blood clots are much less likely to break off and go to your lungs. After treatment of a DVT, it is important to begin an exercise program. The first step in starting any exercise program is to check with your physician. He or she will assist you in finding the right program for you and determining achievable goals. Exercise is not dangerous after a diagnosis of DVT.

### **COMMON SYMPTOMS AFTER A DVT**

- You may have ankle and leg swelling after sitting or standing. The swelling is usually gone when you get up in the morning
- Your leg may ache after standing, sitting or walking. Sitting down and putting your feet up may help relieve the discomfort
- When your feet are in a down position, either sitting or standing, they may appear blue in color. Simply elevate your feet to correct this.

### **REASONS FOR EXERCISE**

- During your initial treatment, you will be less active. Decreased activity will make you weak. The only way to get stronger is to exercise
- Exercise also helps get blood moving faster. This makes it less likely for new clots to form.

### **TYPES OF EXERCISE**

- Walking or using an exercise bike helps to move blood out of your legs and that is helpful
- Any exercise is better than no exercise
- Do not make yourself uncomfortable by doing too much exercise at first
- Never do any exercise to the point of pain.

### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Begin slowly
- Warm up before exercising. This may include stretching or any activity that will help slowly increase breathing, blood flow and body temperature
- If you experience calf pain, notify your physician
- If heavy support stockings are prescribed for you, wear them while exercising
- Cool down after exercising. Walk slowly for a few minutes and do a light stretch. Let your body readjust gradually to the decreased physical demands
- After exercising, it is wise to elevate your leg to reduce any swelling.