

# REDUCE FLIGHT RISKS

DON'T LET MOTION AND A LONG FLIGHT RUIN YOUR TRIP

Flying can trigger more than anxiety in airplane travelers. Sitting for hours in narrow, cramped seats can cause a decrease in blood flow and poor circulation in the legs. These problems can lead to “economy-class syndrome” which refers to a deep vein thrombosis – a blood clot in the leg. Even if you sit in first class or business class, there are things you can do to help avoid this problem. If your seatmates stare, suggest they join you!

## AIRPLANE AEROBICS

- Tense your feet for five seconds, then relax them. Repeat with each muscle group, including your calves, thighs, buttocks, shoulders, neck, forearms, and hands.
- Drop your head forward. Then move it slowly to the right, to the back, then to the left and the front again.
- Raise both shoulders. Move them back, then down, and then forward in a circular motion.
- Reach toward the ceiling with your right arm and stretch. Repeat with your left arm.
- Flex and extend your feet. Spread and then point your toes up and down.
- Get up and walk at least once every hour.
- Focus on your breathing. Inhale and exhale slowly and deeply. It'll help you get enough oxygen into your blood so you don't feel fatigued.

*Action Step*  
Wear loose-fitting clothes, socks, and shoes. If you have cardiovascular disease, talk to your doctor about wearing compression stockings and other advice before you take long flights or travel long distances by car or train.

## WAYS TO DEAL WITH MOTION SICKNESS

- Reserve a seat over one of the wings, if you can.
- Avoid sitting in the tail section, which is usually the bumpiest.
- Get plenty of rest before you fly.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before or during travel.
- Take a motion sickness medication, such as Dramamine, 30 minutes before your plane takes off.
- Open overhead vents and direct air at your face.
- Don't read while traveling and don't focus on any other stationary object.
- Breathe slowly and deeply.