

THE ESSENTIALS OF TREATING POTS

Living with POTS can be challenging, but there are many treatment options that can help reduce symptoms and improve your quality-of-life. It can take time to find the right combination of treatments that works for your specific situation. Be patient with your body and work with your providers to create an individualized treatment plan.



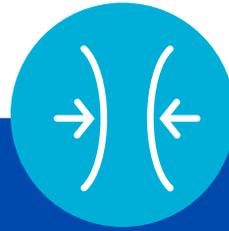
HYDRATE

People with POTS often have low blood volume, so increasing oral fluid intake is an important part of managing POTS. Most experts recommend 2-3 liters a day of hydrating fluids like water, milk, electrolyte beverages, tea, smoothies and soups. Avoid sugary drinks. Alcohol and caffeine can be dehydrating, but some people with POTS can tolerate alcohol or caffeine in moderation.



GET SALTY!

Salt helps expand blood volume and helps you hold on to the fluids you drink. Most experts recommend that people with POTS consume 10-12 grams of sodium per day. One teaspoon of salt provides approximately 2,325 mg of sodium. Even POTS patients with elevated blood pressure upon standing should increase sodium and fluid intake, but speak with your doctor about your specific sodium goal.



COMPRESSION

Medical compression garments can help push more blood up to your heart and brain. Experts recommend 20-30mmHg compression full length stockings. Abdominal compression is also important, because most blood pools in the veins of the lower abdominal area. Knee-high compression socks may help some people, but the most effective compression areas are abdominal and upper thigh.



EXERCISE

Exercise expands blood volume and improves autonomic tone, so it's an important part of managing POTS, but it can be really hard to get started. Start slow with gentle reclined exercises that tone the legs and core. Reclined or seated calisthenics, rowing, recumbent biking and swimming are often recommended. Go at a pace you can tolerate. Consistency is more important than intensity.



GOOD SLEEP

A bad night of sleep can alter autonomic nervous system activity even in healthy people, so it's really important to get enough good quality sleep to minimize POTS symptoms. Turning off devices an hour before bed, sticking to a sleep routine, avoiding large meals before bed, and gentle exercise during the day can improve sleep. Talk to your doctor if you are having sleep difficulties.



HEALTHY DIET

People with POTS often feel worse after high carbohydrate/ sugar intake and large meals. Try to avoid processed sugary junk food, and instead focus your diet on nutrient dense fruits and vegetables, nuts and legumes, and lean meats and fish. Eating smaller meals and snacks more often throughout the day may help you feel better than eating three large meals per day.



MANAGE STRESS

POTS isn't caused by stress, but stress can worsen POTS symptoms, so it's important to find healthy ways to manage the normal life stress we all experience. Mindfulness, prayer, yoga, meditation, breathing exercises, relaxing baths, reading, knitting, drawing... find what relaxes you and take a little time to focus on it each day. Relaxation increases parasympathetic nervous system activity, which can help reduce POTS symptoms.



MEDICATION

Some people with POTS do not need medication, but many patients do benefit from medications that reduce or prevent their symptoms. Talk to your doctor to see if medications may be recommended for you. Common medications used to treat POTS include beta blockers or ivabradine, midodrine, fludrocortisone or pyridostigmine. There are many other options for specific symptoms.

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