

## **Keep Your Blood Flowing To Prevent a Summer Travel Mishap....**

- Kori Propst, MS- Personal Trainer

Most of us will be doing a fair amount of traveling this summer, whether by plane, train, or automobile. Gas prices have gone up, but we should not allow our blood pressure to rise as well during this heavy summer travel season! Staying active during travel is just as important as when you are performing your normal exercise routine in the comfort of your hometown, and possibly even more so when you are stuck in the cramped seat of an airliner or lack the proper knee-room in your luggage-packed car!

Ever heard of deep vein thrombosis? The condition can manifest from a pooling of the blood in your lower extremities, caused by a lack of movement for significant periods of time. We all have those partners who refuse to stop for us to use the rest area while on a road trip...well, there is another reason to take your foot off the gas and allow for some time out of the car. A bladder mishap is one problem, but a blood clot in your calf or thigh that can travel to your lungs is a whole other issue that could result in death.

The American Heart Association estimates that 1 out of every 1000 Americans will experience DVT. Periods of immobility increase the risk of developing deep vein thrombosis, as well as obesity, clotting disorders, pregnancy, and vein damage caused by lower extremity surgery. Sufferers will typically experience a swollen or painful leg, usually in the calf, but symptoms can be silent also. You can prevent this condition by taking precautionary measures prior to your trip and increasing your movement during your travels. Keep the following tips in mind as you set off on your grand summer escape:

- Whether sitting in a plane or car or waiting for your plane to arrive to the terminal, take the opportunity to move around. Elevate each foot and rotate your ankle; do some heel raises and contract your calves; pull your knees to your chest and stretch; try to sit in the aisle seat so you can get up and at least make a trip to the lavatory; when the seat belt sign goes off, stand up and shake out your legs. Walk around the terminal, check out all the awful food choices they offer, and then go grab your healthy snack of almonds and carrot sticks while you wait for your flight!
- Consider wearing socks that don't have that heavy, tight elastic band at the top; studies have shown that compression stockings significantly decrease your risk of DVT by putting gentle pressure on the lower leg muscles.
- Don't cross your legs, as it cuts off circulation.
- Stay hydrated. When you are not consuming adequate fluids, your blood thickens and your vessels narrow, increasing DVT risk. Limit alcohol and caffeine, which contribute to dehydration.

### **TRAINING TRIVIA**

Drawings of swimmers doing the breaststroke- or perhaps the dog paddle- dating from the Stone Age have been found in Egyptian caves. Records suggest the first swimming competitions were held in 36 B.C.E., organized by a Japanese emperor.

Myth: The longer you hold a stretch, the more flexible you'll become.

Reality: Stretching for 30 seconds seems to improve flexibility just as well as stretching for 60 seconds, although 30 seconds does seem to be more effective than 15.

Vegetarians have many nutritious high-protein options, including beans (15g/cup), tofu (10g/cup), hummus (6g/ ½ cup). Veggie burgers and meatless breakfast products made of soy protein generally have 7-14g of protein each.

The first archaeological evidence of yoga's existence is found in stone artifacts depicting figures performing yoga postures. These artifacts, excavated from a valley in India, appear to date from 3000 B.C.E.