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## **Protecting Your Health During Air Travel**

*Simple Measures Can Lower Your Risk for “Economy Class Syndrome”*

**Charlotte, NC – May 11, 2001** – As air travel increases each year, Americans can expect to hear and see more news about the term “economy class syndrome” (ECS). This term is used to describe the leg symptoms experienced by frequent air travelers or air passengers on long trips, and has been associated with the serious leg condition called deep vein thrombosis (DVT). While there is a heightened concern about this condition among air passengers, many people are not aware that there are easy, effective and economical solutions that can reduce the symptoms of ECS and decrease the risk of DVT. Socks and stockings with gradient compression can help to prevent the leg swelling and decreased blood circulation that may be contributors to DVT.

During periods of extended inactivity in cramped conditions, such as long plane flights, normal blood circulation can be restricted, which can cause leg fatigue and discomfort, and may contribute to the serious problem of DVT. Activity of the calf muscles is needed to contract and propel blood from the legs back to the heart. Without this activity, blood can pool in the veins of the leg and form a blood clot in a deep vein – a deep vein thrombosis. When a passenger lands and begins normal activity, a clot can dislodge and migrate to the heart or lungs where it can cause a pulmonary embolism (PE), a dangerous and often deadly condition. DVT can strike men and women who are in good health with relatively little warning. However, obesity, pregnancy, chronic heart disease, use of hormone medications, malignancies, history of blood clots, varicose veins, and recent trauma or surgery may increase a person’s risk for DVT.

To prevent swelling, aching and fatigued legs, and to lower the risk of DVT, physicians recommend that travelers take simple measures while flying, such as:

- Stay hydrated with non-alcoholic and caffeine-free beverages.
- Get up and walk around the plane every hour.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Stretch and exercise your legs to improve blood flow when restricted to your seat.
- Ask your physician if you are predisposed to any risk factors for DVT.

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Experts also strongly recommend using gradient compression hosiery during air travel.

“Gradient compression socks or stockings mimic the function of a water pump that propels water uphill, essentially to counteract the effects of gravity,” said Anthony J. Comerota, M.D., Chief of Vascular Surgery and Professor of Surgery, Temple University School of Medicine. “By delivering pressure at the ankle that gradually decreases as it extends up the leg, gradient compression hosiery helps assist veins in the movement of blood back to the heart and reduces blood pooling that can cause swollen, fatigued legs that may contribute to the formation of dangerous blood clots.”

To help prevent leg discomfort, air travelers can wear medical-grade gradient compression hosiery, such as Jobst Gradient Compression Hosiery, which offers an accurate fit based on ankle and calf circumferences. Proper fit guarantees delivery of the most precise and effective gradient compression profile to the legs. Jobst Hosiery is the number one physician-recommended brand of gradient compression hosiery, both in the United States and worldwide.

According to the American Heart Association, DVT from all causes occurs in approximately two million Americans each year. The condition is not only associated with long flights, but is also linked with activities or occupations that may involve extended periods of sitting. Jobst Compression Hosiery is available without a prescription at pharmacies or medical supply outlets. For more information about economy class syndrome or deep vein thrombosis, visit [www.economyclasssyndrome.com](http://www.economyclasssyndrome.com).

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