

## Step 1: Plan Your Day

Planning your day and making sure to follow the simple steps below is an easy way reduce the risk of symptoms.

### Avoid Physical Triggers:



- Standing up quickly
- Standing still for long periods
- High temperatures
- Hot showers
- Climbing long flights of stairs
- Holding arms up for a long time

### Food and Drinks:



- Aim for 2 to 3L water a day
- Eat enough salt
- Eat smaller frequent meals
- Choose proteins over high carb or sugar meals
- Avoid Caffeine and energy drinks
- Avoid Allergens
- Avoid Alcohol

### Avoid Psychological Triggers:



- Work stress
- Social or home stress
- POTS can feel like anxiety but is not caused by anxiety
- POTS is not caused by anxiety



## ABOUT BODYFIT PHYSIO

### Our Opening Hours

Monday	9:30 am	-	7:30 pm
Tuesday	7:30 am	-	7:30 pm
Wednesday	7:30 am	-	7:30 pm
Thursday	7:30 am	-	7:00 pm
Friday	7:30 am	-	6:45 pm
Saturday	8:30 am	-	12:30 pm

### Our Address:

436 High Street, Northcote Vic 3070

### Our Phone Number:

(03) 9481 2348

Book an initial appointment with  
your POTS & OI Physio

# Self Care Check-List

Orthostatic Intolerance & POTS



### Your Basic Daily Care List

- Drink 2 to 3L water a day
- Eat enough salt
- Wear Compression Garments



## Step 2: Implement Short Term Strategies

How to fight against symptoms  
when they show up.

- Start mornings in bed: sit, drink 1-2 cups fluid, take meds before getting up.
- Get up in stages: From lying to sitting in bed – sit on edge of bed – stand up.
- Before standing or sitting up - pump your feet, squeeze and release your thighs, squeeze and release your buttocks, squeeze your hands into a fist.
- Sit for routine static tasks: washing your hair, brushing teeth, doing make-up, food preparation.
- Take deep belly breaths to help circulation. Inhale against resistance (like sucking air through a straw)
- Cool your skin with a cold damp cloth or a mister
- Carry a fan
- Finish showers with cool water.

## Long-Term Prevention

### Physical:

- Get up and move around frequently – to decrease blood pooling
- Compression. Abdominal and upper thigh compression is most effective – Abdominal binder, high waisted shorts, leggings, tights. (20 – 40 mmHg ideal) Choose garments that are comfortable to wear – they don't work if left in the wardrobe.
- Place 10 to 15 cm blocks under the head of the bed, this helps your body to retain fluid overnight.
- Practice deep abdominal breathing several times a day. In through the nose and slowly out via the mouth.
- Appropriate exercise. Aerobic plus leg and core strength. Start in reclined position e.g. Pilates, Swimming, recumbent bike. Progress gradually under guidance from a POTS aware physiotherapist or Exercise physiologist.

### Food and Drinks:

- Drink lots of fluid and electrolytes (Aim for 3L a day)
- Avoid sugary drinks
- 8 to 10g salt/day (including all salt intake) is recommended IF you have been diagnosed with POTS/OI and you do not have issues with high blood pressure. Do not exceed 10g/day without medical advice
- Eat frequent small meals. (Avoid high sugar/simple Carb foods)

### Psychological:

- Reduce activity/change schedule
- Pace/plan your activities
- Get more sleep
- Be kind to yourself
- Ask for help
- Practice relaxation – mindfulness, diaphragmatic breathing, meditation

## What you can do when you are...



### ...standing up:

- Keep circulation going - Wriggle your toes, shift weight from side to side, calf raises, fidget, march on the spot.
- Push blood back up to your heart - cross and squeeze legs together, squeeze your buttocks, stand with one leg on a chair, squat.
- Support upper body – lean on the kitchen bench, lean on a shopping trolley.



### ...sitting down:

- Sit with knees pulled up to your chest
- Prop your feet up
- Lean forward with hands or elbows on knees OR lean back and use the backrest



### ...lying down:

- Lie with feet propped up on a chair or against a wall
- Avoid lying still for prolonged periods unless sleeping

