

Physiotherapy Department

Frimley Park, Wexham Park and Heatherwood Hospitals

Postural Hypotension Non-pharmaceutical Management

For a translation of this leaflet or for accessing this information in another format:

Large
Print



Please contact (PALS) the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on:

Frimley Park Hospital

Telephone: 0300 613 6530

Email: fhft.palsfrimleypark@nhs.net

Wexham Park & Heatherwood Hospitals

Telephone: 0300 615 3365

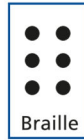
Email: fhft.palswexhampark@nhs.net



Translation



Audio



Braille

Frimley Park Hospital Portsmouth Road, Frimley, Surrey, GU16 7UJ	Heatherwood Hospital Brook Avenue, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7GB	Wexham Park Hospital Wexham, Slough, Berkshire, SL2 4HL
Hospital switchboard: 0300 614 5000		Website: www.fhft.nhs.uk

Title of Leaflet	Postural Hypotension-non pharmaceutical management				
Author	Nicola Brown	Department	Physiotherapy		
Ref. No	BB/095/1	Issue Date	March 2024	Review Date	2026

Legal Notice

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible. Please therefore always check specific advice or any concerns you may have with your doctor.

Committed to excellence

Working together

Facing the future



Information for patients, relatives
and carers

Committed to excellence

Working together

Facing the future

Date	Time	What managed	Comments/symptoms
e.g 15/3/23	10am	Sat in chair 30mins	No dizziness

How can I reduce or manage my symptoms?

➤ Daily

- Ensure you are drinking an adequate amount of fluid (usually 1.5-2L, your health care provider can advise you on this).
- Sleep with the head of the bed up at least 20 degrees at any time of day or night (have at least 2 pillows if not an electric bed).
- Sit up as much as possible when in bed and awake, or ideally spend as much time as possible sat out of bed in a chair.
- Avoid being still for long periods of time - aim to move (in the bed or chair or on your feet) for a few mins every hour during the day.
- Eat little & often-avoid large meals.
- Avoid very hot baths and showers.
- Avoid alcohol.
- If the above measures do not completely help, then a Pharmacist or Doctor can review your medication in detail to identify if any need adjusting or discontinuing.



➤ **Advice for getting up out of bed?**

Please ensure a healthcare practitioner is with you.

1. Sit up fully in bed before moving out from the bed.
2. Drink a cup of water/squash.
3. Do some warm-up exercises, moving the legs to get the blood pumping (e.g., crossing legs, ankle pumps, bending legs up and down, 'cycling' legs, straight leg raise, squashing knees down into bed each for 30 seconds at a time, total 5 mins moving).
4. Slowly sit over the side of the bed. Monitor for symptoms of postural hypotension (see page 2). A member of staff may check your blood pressure at this point.
5. Immediately do some seated exercises (any moving of legs for 30 seconds at time, at least 2mins moving).
6. Slowly stand up and remain standing at least 3 minutes before going anywhere.

➤ **What should I do if I feel the symptoms coming on?**

Stop what you are doing.

If the symptoms are severe, then lie back down.

If you develop **mild-moderate symptoms** of postural hypotension, then **remain sitting or standing** (depending on where you are when the symptoms came on) and do the following:

- ❖ drink a cup of water/squash
- ❖ keep moving your legs - most effective is contracting/tensing your muscles below the waist for 30secs:
 - thigh muscle squeezing (think pulling up your knee caps)
 - bottom muscle squeezing
 - slow marching on the spot
 - leg elevation
 - leg-crossing and uncrossing

*As long as your **symptoms** are **stable or improving**, then **remain sitting or standing**, having sips of drink and moving (or tensing) your legs.*

Either once symptoms resolve or have been stable for 10 minutes (i.e., not get any worse than when they started) then continue with what you were doing-sitting in chair/walking somewhere...

If symptoms are worsening and do not improve within 2-3mins then return to lying in bed (sooner if you feel the severity of your symptoms increasing, e.g feeling very faint).

Allow your symptoms to resolve lying down. Once resolved, slowly sit back up in bed again. Try again another time, this could be after a rest the same day.