



Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS)



Overview

This condition makes your heart beat much faster than normal when you stand up after sitting or lying down. It can make you feel lightheaded or dizzy. It can cause you to faint.

Causes and risk factors

Why does it happen? We aren't sure what causes POTS. It could be linked to a problem with your nervous system, circulatory system or some other issue. Many factors may be involved. Some things raise your risk for POTS. These include being pregnant, having an illness or infection, being injured, and having surgery. And, it's more common in women.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms? You may feel the symptoms of POTS when you stand up, or when you're standing or walking for a long period of time. You can feel a wide range of things. Your heart may race or beat abnormally. You may feel lightheaded or dizzy. You may feel like your brain is cloudy. You can feel anxious, nervous or tired. You may shake and sweat. You can have things like chest pain and shortness of breath. Ask your doctor for a full list of symptoms.

Treatment

How do we treat it? We often manage this syndrome with things like diet and exercise. Your doctor may recommend dietary changes (like getting more fluids and salts) along with specific exercises you can do to help your symptoms. You may also benefit from compression stockings. These keep blood from pooling in your legs. And, we may give you medications. Your doctor will create a plan that's right for you.

