

POTS UK

POSTURAL TACHYCARDIA SYNDROME



Most common symptoms include light-headedness or dizziness, fatigue and palpitations (an awareness of the heart pounding). Other symptoms include fainting or near fainting, headaches, poor concentration, sweating and gut problems.

Diagnosing PoTS

To be diagnosed with PoTS patients must experience some of the above symptoms in association with a persistent increase in heart rate of 30 beats per minute (40 in teenagers) after moving from a lying to standing position. Although symptoms are similar to those experienced by people with abnormally low blood pressure, blood pressure does not necessarily drop in PoTS (and may increase).

Detailed questioning and physical examination should determine which tests are necessary. The "Stand Test" can be carried out in the GP's surgery. Heart rate and blood pressure should be measured when lying down, then after 2, 5 and 10 minutes of standing still. Sometimes a Tilt Table Test is performed. Other tests may be necessary to rule out conditions with symptoms similar to PoTS or check for associated conditions.

What is PoTS?

PoTS is a common condition and yet few healthcare professionals have heard of it. PoTS causes a group of symptoms in the upright position that are mostly relieved by lying down. It more commonly affects younger women, although men can be affected too.

PoTS is an 'invisible' illness in that those affected often appear well, yet some are so disabled by their symptoms that they cannot attend work or school. PoTS is not life threatening, but significant lifestyle changes may be needed to manage symptoms.

How is PoTS treated?

90% of patients will improve with lifestyle changes and (if necessary) medication. The following are often recommended: increased fluids, salt, small frequent meals low in sugary refined food, horizontal exercise, compression garments, avoidance of prolonged standing or sitting, heat and alcohol.

Other associated conditions

The causes of PoTS are not yet known. However, it seems to be common in Joint Hypermobility Syndrome (also known as hypermobility type of Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and some autoimmune conditions like Sjogrens Syndrome. It may also follow a viral illness and be associated with pregnancy, diabetes and a number of other conditions.

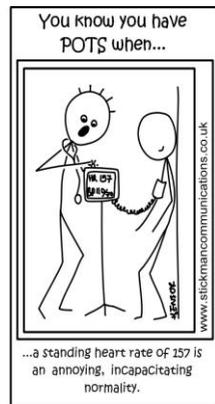
If you suspect PoTS?

There is detailed guidance available on the PoTS UK website www.potsuk.org including a list of doctors with a special interest in PoTS.

Who are we?

POTS UK is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) run by patients who have a medical background. We aim to:

- ♥ Raise awareness about this under-recognised and misdiagnosed condition both with the general public and the medical community.
- ♥ Support and inform patients and their family and friends (including via our website, Facebook, Twitter and regular newsletters).
- ♥ Initiate and facilitate research.
- ♥ Improve health services for patients with PoTS.
- ♥ Offer hope that life can be fulfilling despite living with this debilitating and life altering condition.



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Sources of evidence: www.potsuk.org/sources_of_evidence