Marching on the spot
Sitting down, march your legs briskly on the spot. Repeat this for 10 seconds, 3 times.

Leg extensions
Sitting down with both feet flat on the floor. Lift one foot off the floor until your knee is straight. Hold for 10 seconds, then slowly lower your foot back to the floor. Repeat 3 times, then repeat the exercise on the other leg.

Other formats:

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.
Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.

We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.
What is postural hypotension?

You may have been diagnosed as having Postural hypotension by your GP or ward Doctor. This leaflet is designed to give you some information and guidance on how to self-manage this condition with some simple exercises and advise. Postural hypotension is a drop in blood pressure due to a change in body position, most commonly when standing up. This drop in blood pressure causes a temporary reduction in blood flow to the brain.

Symptoms are most common after standing up and can include:

- Dizziness
- Light headedness
- Weakness
- Fainting
- Nausea
- Heart palpitations

Things that can make your symptoms worse

- Dehydration
- Symptoms may be worse in the morning
- Symptoms may be worse after standing still, sitting or lying down for a long time

Things that can make your symptoms worse

- Drinking alcohol
- Hot temperatures
- Infection or illness
- Straining on the toilet

What can you do to help?

- Wear compression stockings
- Your physiotherapist or doctor may recommend an abdominal binder.
- Try to drink a large glass of cold water before standing up
- Try sleeping in a more upright position in bed, with more pillows.
- Make sure you are drinking enough water throughout the day.
- If your symptoms are severe, talk to your doctor about increasing the amount of salt in your diet.
- Exercises can reduce your symptoms. We would encourage you to try the exercises on the next pages.

Simple exercises to help decrease your symptoms

Exercises to do while sitting, before you stand up:

Toe tapping
Sitting with your feet flat on the floor, lift your toes up with your heel still on the ground, then ‘tap’ them back onto the ground. Do this for 10 seconds, 3 times.

Heel lifts
Sitting with your feet flat on the floor, lift your heel off the floor onto your ‘tiptoes’, then lower your heels back to the ground. Do this for 10 seconds, 3 times.