



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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ALERT 12 - 19

## DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS

### WHAT HAPPENED:

Upon returning home from an international trip, an employee was hospitalized for Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT). He was admitted for approximately one week and was prescribed preventative medications for several months. When other employees within the company were notified, via an internal alert, of the risks of DVT, additional employees within the organization also reported that they, or those they work with, have also experienced DVT during the past year.

### WHAT CAUSED IT:

DVT is the formation of a blood clot in a deep vein which usually affects the leg or pelvis. DVT has been seen in some people after long haul flights. Research shows that the development of a DVT is probably due to a combination of dehydration and immobility, as well as other risk factors such as: coronary heart disease, obesity, cigarette smoking, pregnancy, taking a high dose combined oral contraceptive pill, family history of DVT, or a recent surgery or injury. It is also possible to develop a DVT during prolonged periods of immobility such as a long drive or sitting at the computer for extensive periods of time without moving.

### CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

The company provided all employees with information on the causes and symptoms of DVT as well as preventative measures that travelers can take:

The symptoms of DVT, often in the calf, are:

- redness
- warmth
- tenderness
- swelling with one calf much larger than the other

The most serious complication of a DVT is the potential for it to develop into a pulmonary embolism. This occurs when the DVT dislodges from the leg and travels into the vessels of the lungs. This very dangerous condition can affect a person's ability to breathe and can be fatal.

To treat a DVT, the patient is usually placed on a course of blood-thinning medication to dissolve the clot.

**As far as prevention goes, the best thing to do is keep moving!** If you have any of the risk factors above, you should speak to your doctor about obtaining a pair of compression stockings to wear whenever you will be immobile for a long period of time, such as on your next long drive or flight. Drink plenty of water and avoid dehydrating alcohol, coffee and energy drinks and. Get up and walk around as often as possible. Also, please see the next page for some calf exercises to improve circulation and prevent DVT.

IADC Note: See IADC Alert: 10 – 35

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**The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.**

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## Recommended Exercises to Prevent DVT

### 1. Ankle Circles

- Lift feet off the floor. Draw a circle with the toes, simultaneously moving one foot clockwise and the other foot counterclockwise. Reverse circles. Rotate in each direction for 15 seconds. Repeat if desired.



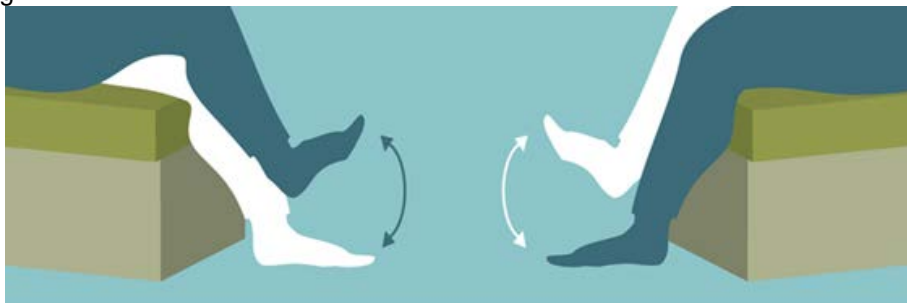
### 2. Foot Pumps (Foot motion is in three stages.)

- Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upward as high as you can. Put both feet flat on the floor. Lift heels high, keeping balls of feet on the floor. Repeat these three stages in a continuous motion and in 30-second intervals.



### 3. Knee Lifts

- Lift leg with knee bent while contracting your thigh muscle. Alternate legs. Repeat 20 to 30 times for each leg.



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