



POTS


STARTER GUIDE

for Children & Teens

Clear answers. Thoughtful care.
A structured path forward.

 **YOU'RE NOT ALONE.**
We're here to listen, evaluate,
and help your child feel better
and get back to the life
they love.

 This guide provides practical steps you can take right now while working with your child's healthcare team.

 Trusted pediatric cardiology care.
Focused on today, invested in tomorrow.

1 WHAT IS POTS?

POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome) is a type of autonomic dysfunction. It affects how the body regulates heart rate and blood flow when changing positions—especially from lying down to standing.

It commonly affects children and teens, particularly adolescent girls, and can significantly impact daily life, school, activities, and overall well-being.



POTS is real, treatable,
and manageable
with the right support.

2 COMMON SYMPTOMS



Dizziness or
lightheadedness



Rapid heartbeat
or palpitations



Fatigue



Brain fog



Nausea



Headaches



Exercise
intolerance



Feeling shaky
or weak



Blurred vision

Symptoms often worsen while standing and improve
with sitting or lying down.

3 WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE BODY?

When standing, gravity causes blood to pool in the legs and lower body. In POTS, the autonomic nervous system does not respond properly, which leads to:



Heart rate increases too much
(often 30+ bpm in teens, or over
120 bpm) to maintain blood flow
to the brain and body.



Blood pressure may drop or
not rise appropriately.



Reduced blood flow to the brain
causes many of the symptoms
experienced.



Symptoms can fluctuate day to day
and improve over time with treatment
and support.

4 START HERE: WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW



HYDRATION

Aim for 2-3 liters of fluids each day.
Water is best! Spread your intake
throughout the day.



SALT

Increase salt intake to help your body
retain fluid and maintain blood volume.
Typical goal: 3-10 grams of salt per day
(1½-2½ teaspoons). Work with your
provider to find the right amount.



MOVEMENT

Stay active within your limits.
Avoid long periods of sitting or lying
down during the day.



Small, consistent steps make a big difference!

5 EXERCISE FRAMEWORK

A gradual, structured program helps retrain the body's response
to upright activity. Consistency is key!

PHASE 1 RECUMBENT



Weeks 1-3

- Focus on building endurance
- Examples: recumbent bike, rowing, swimming
- 3-4 days per week

PHASE 2 SEMI-UPRIGHT



Weeks 4-8

- Add upright training gradually
- Examples: recumbent bike with less recline, elliptical
- 4-5 days per week

PHASE 3 UPRIGHT



Weeks 8+

- Progress to walking and light strength training
- Build intensity slowly
- 5-6 days per week



Your care team will help create a plan that's right for your child.

6 WHEN TO SEEK CARE

Contact your healthcare provider if your child:



Faints or has episodes of passing out



Has chest pain or trouble breathing



Has worsening symptoms that
interfere with daily life



Is unable to keep fluids down



Has new or concerning symptoms
that worry you

You know your child best—trust your instincts.
We're here to help.

7 OUR APPROACH

At Mississippi Children's Heart Clinic, we take a comprehensive
and individualized approach to POTS care.



Listen

We take time to
understand your
child's story.



Evaluate

We use specialized
testing to get
answers.



Personalize

We create a plan
that fits your
child's unique needs.



Support

We partner with
your family for the
long term.



You are not alone. We walk alongside you
every step of the way.

8 ABOUT OUR PROGRAM



Our POTS Program combines
advanced diagnostic testing,
individualized treatment,
and ongoing support from
a team with deep experience
in caring for children and
teens with autonomic
disorders.



Structured care. Expert guidance.
Real results.

9 NEXT STEPS



Schedule an evaluation with our POTS team.
Early diagnosis and treatment can help your
child feel better and get back to what they love.



Explore our POTS Program

Learn more about our comprehensive approach
at mississippichildrensheart.com/pots-program



Download our other helpful guides
Hydration & Salt Guide and
Starter Exercise Plan

