

MILE HIGH FITNESS CLUB

IN-FLIGHT TRAINING FOR THE HOLIDAY TRAVEL SEASON

If you travel by plane as much as I do, you know that it can be rough on your body. Try these exercises to combat poor circulation, swelling, sore joints and lethargy on cramped flights.

Squeeze a tennis ball, a racquetball or even a pair of socks with your hands until they're tired.

Keep the balls of your feet planted and raise your legs using your calf muscles. If this is too easy, place your carry-on bag on your knees. Continue until you get tired.

Plant your heels firmly and raise your toes as high as possible. Hold for five seconds, and relax. Repeat until tired.

Place your hands on your armrests and raise your knees slowly—together is harder than one at a time—toward your chin. Lower them slowly. Repeat until tired.

Cross your legs. Rotate the dangling foot in as wide a circle as possible. Continue until tired.

Stretch your neck by keeping your chin close to your throat and tilting your head forward. Roll your head from one shoulder to the other, but avoid rotating it backward.

Flex your trapezius muscles by doing shoulder hunches. Lower your shoulders, and then raise them up toward your ears into a shrug. Hold for five seconds. Continue until tired.

Flex your gluteus muscles and hold for as long as possible. Squeezing your butt like this may occasion strange glances, but these muscles are the biggest in the human body and need to be exercised, too.

You can also reduce cramping and increase blood flow in the lower extremities while in flight by placing a couple pillows under your knees and pedal like you're on a bicycle. You can also place them between your knees like a thigh exerciser.

When aisles are relatively empty and the seat belt sign is off, walk around, stretch and do lunges. To lunge, take a big step (about half your height) and gently lower yourself as far as you can while keeping the torso upright and back leg straight. Once you become skilled, you'll be able to work up a sweat—not to mention an audience. And who knows, that handsome flight attendant might bring you some warm nuts!

Ken Hunt is the owner of Steel Gym, 146 W 23rd St, 212-352-9876, steelgym.com.