

# Nixon Had Phlebitis Before Trip

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President Nixon had a mild case of phlebitis, a sometimes dangerous inflammation of the veins in one leg before his recent Middle East trip.

White House deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren disclosed this last night, but said that Dr. Walter Tkach, the President's physician, has

announced him "in good health" and fit for his trip to Brussels and Moscow which starts today.

Phlebitis is typically accompanied by the formation of a thrombus or clot of coagulated blood. If the clot breaks away the condition can become more serious, and—if the clot reaches the lungs—fatal.

But the fact that the President made an active Middle East journey apparently with little trouble would seem to confirm Tkach's diagnosis that the condition was not only "mild" but has now "resolved itself."

"The President is in good health and is looking forward to the trip," Warren quoted Tkach as saying. The doctor was unavailable for comment.

CBS News reported last night that clots in his leg made the President limp during his Mideast trip. But Warren said "I did not notice him limping at all and I saw him a lot."

Other correspondents confirmed this and Washington Post White House correspondent Carroll Kilpatrick said he watched the President review

troops at every stop, as well as walk to reception lines and stand in them to shake hands with as many as 200 guests without any apparent trouble.

On a scorchingly hot day in Saudi Arabia, the President chose to walk about two blocks to an appointment with King Faisal, explaining to the king, "We're a couple of man-

utes late, but we decided to walk."

The President was hospitalized last July for viral pneumonia, partly caused, his doctors said, by overwork.

Phlebitis is typically accompanied by swelling, stiffness, tenderness and, sometimes, severe pain. It is usually treated by anti-coagulant drugs and

sometimes other medications, use of leg bandages to support the weakened vein and, if serious enough, surgery.

It tends to occur most often in persons with fragile or varicose veins, and sometimes strikes air travelers or others who sit for long periods with little exercise.

Doctors usually advise more exercise for those who have

had the disease, and it is highly possible that the President's doctors will repeat their old advice to him—advice they say he often ignores—that he get more exercise.

"People who have had one attack must guard against a subsequent one," warns one surgeon, Dr. Robert E. Rothenberg, in a well-known health text.