



Mind Your Posture: On Holiday (whether travelling by train, plane or automobile!)

British Chiropractic Association offers advice to keep you standing tall

So often, when people are on holiday and out of their normal routine, they can end up causing themselves unnecessary discomfort and stress by injuring themselves so taking note of these top holiday tips from the British Chiropractic Association is a good place to start.

However you are travelling, before you go.....

Suitcase selection – Choose wisely, buy the lightest case possible that has wheels; hard cases tend to weigh quite a lot before you even start to fill them.

Two cases are better than one – If possible, take two light suitcases rather than one, so you can distribute the weight more evenly.

Get a good night's sleep – Travelling when tired increases your chances of injury, so make sure you sleep well the night before a long journey and avoid rushing around.

Driving

Make adjustments – Many back problems are caused or aggravated poor driving posture. If you're driving to your holiday destination, ensure the seat position is slightly backwards so that it feels natural and that your elbows are at a comfortable and relaxed angle.

Relaxing – Relax at the wheel, as this reduces stress on the spine and allows your seat to take your weight.

Keep an eye on the clock – Stop and stretch your legs (and arms!) at least every two hours.

Clench! – If you are stuck in traffic, exercise in your seat. Try buttock clenches, side bends and shoulder shrugs and circles.

Keep it loose – Don't wear tight clothing as they will restrict your movement.

Flying

Flying high – Avoid alcohol before and during the flight as this will cause you to dehydrate and, in turn, exaggerate muscle pain. Drink plenty of water instead.

Air-exercise – You will be restricted to your seat for most of the flight, but avoid stiffness by doing shoulder shrugs, buttock clenches and foot circles. Take the opportunity to get up and stretch your legs whenever you can.

Avoid 'travelators' – Get your joints moving quickly after a flight and walk to arrivals rather than the easy option of a moving walkway.

Round and round – Ensure your bags are easily identifiable (e.g. knot a ribbon around the handle) to avoid lifting other people's heavy cases in error.

Push, don't pull! – Many wheeled cases encourage you to pull the case handle from behind, but this makes the upper body/back twist. If possible, push the case in front of you or use a trolley making sure you choose one from the stack which does not have 'wonky wheels', as keeping it on track will not do your back any good!

At Your Destination...

Bed down – When you get to your hotel, if your bed is too hard ask the hotel staff for a spare duvet or blanket to put between you and the mattress. Firm beds are not always best, but it is easier to soften a hard bed than make a soft bed harder.

Lounging around – If you're heading to the sun loungers in search of the perfect tan, try not to lie on your tummy with your back and neck arched back when reading your book or magazine. Put the reading matter on the floor, so that you can view it over the edge of the sun bed; this should allow you to keep your head and neck in a more neutral position.

Exercise in safety – If keeping in shape is on your holiday agenda, ensure you have a full induction to the hotel gym equipment.

Further information about chiropractic can be obtained by logging
on to www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk
For further information contact the
British Chiropractic Association on 0118 950 5950