

Don't Put Your Back out Having Fun In The Sun!

Summer time = Holidays! The last thing you want is for back pain to ruin that dream getaway. Recent consumer research from the British Chiropractic Association found that **almost one in two people in the UK suffer from some kind of back pain**. It is often when people are on holiday, out of their normal routine, that things go wrong.

Holidays are, on the whole, seen as relaxing and rejuvenating, but only too frequently people injure themselves. It doesn't have to be adventurous activities like bungy-jumping that cause a problem; just picking up a suitcase the wrong way or trying out the hotel gym equipment without proper instruction can lead to serious discomfort.

[The British Chiropractic Association](#) has some useful tips to follow before and during your holidays...



Before you go....

- **Suitcase selection** – Buy the lightest case possible that has wheels; hard cases can sometimes weigh a lot even with nothing in them!
- **Two cases are better than one** - If possible take two lighter suitcases, rather than one; this means that the weight is better distributed.
- **Push, don't pull!** Many wheeled cases encourage you to pull the case handle from behind, but this causes the upper body/back twist. Instead, push the case in front of you.
- **Get a good night's sleep** – Travelling when tired increases your chances of injury, so make sure you sleep well the night before a flight and avoid rushing around.

Driving you round the bend...

- **Make adjustments** – Over 32,000 people visit a chiropractor each month with injuries that are aggravated, or caused by, poor driving posture. So 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
- **Relax** - relaxing at the wheel as this reduces stress on the spine and allows your seat to take your weight
- **Take regular breaks** – you should stop and stretch your legs (and arms!) at least every two hours
- **Clench your cheeks** - if you are stuck in traffic exercise in your seat. Try buttock clenches, side bends and shoulder shrugs and circles
- **Leave the tight clothes at home** – as they will restrict your movement

Up, Up and Away....

- **Flying high** - If you're flying, drink plenty of soft drinks NOT alcohol during the flight, as this will cause dehydration, which can aggravate muscle pain
- **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

At Your Destination...

- **Bed down at the hotel** - When you get to your hotel if the bed is too hard ask the hotel staff for a spare duvet or continental quilt or blanket to put between you and the mattress. Firm beds are not always best but it is easier to make a hard bed softer than a soft bed harder
- **Lounging around** - if you're heading to the sun lounger in search of that perfect tan, try not to lie on your tummy with your back and neck arched back to read a book. Put the book on the floor and read over the edge of the sun bed this should allow you to have 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 as you would at home.

Keep these tips in mind and you'll be well on your way to a pain-free and enjoyable holiday. If you are experiencing discomfort, then consulting a chiropractor could help you get back on track for your time away.

You can find your local BCA chiropractor by calling [0118 950 5950](tel:01189505950) or visiting the website on www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk and using the [Find a Chiropractor](#) feature.