

Some helpful holiday advice for the summer

The last thing you want is back pain to ruin that dream getaway. According to research from the British Chiropractic Association, according to research by the Association in 2007, 47% of the population suffer from back pain and it is often when people are on holiday, out of their normal routine, that things go wrong.

Be aware of the potential pitfalls before and during your holiday with these useful tips.

Before you go....

Suitcase selection – Choose wisely, buy the lightest case possible that has wheels; hard cases can sometimes weigh 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 easily.

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.

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 you round the bend...

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.

Take regular breaks – 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 – They will restrict your movement.

Up, Up and Away....

Flying high – If you're flying, avoid alcohol during the flight as this will cause you to dehydrate. This can exaggerate muscle pain, so 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.

Arrivals...

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

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

Steer clear of trolleys – Unless your case does not have wheels of its own, try not to use airport trolleys. Damaged trolleys with 'wonky' wheels are common and you could hurt your back trying to correct a wayward trolley.

At Your Destination...

Bed down at the hotel – 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 that 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.

Clinic Information:

Park View Acupuncture and Chiropractic Clinic

35 Chesswood Road

Worthing

BN11 2AA

01903 230066

info@park-view.co.uk

www.park-view.co.uk