

AVOID BACK PAIN WHEN TRAVELING

Question: It seems like every time I go traveling, whether by car or plane, my low back hurts. I have been out of town with severe back spasms and can't get help. Is there anything I can do to avoid this?

Answer: This seems to be a common occurrence for many people. There are multiple stressors to the low back when traveling. Riding in a car for long periods or sitting on a plane can strain your back. Lifting suitcases, especially out of the trunk of your car poses risk. Placing bags in the overhead compartment on a plane can hurt your back and neck if you arch too much. And to top it off, you may sleep in a crummy bed and wake up worse in the morning!

The following tips may be of help in avoiding back and neck pain:

Pack multiple smaller suitcases rather than one very large suitcase. These will be easier to manage and you can carry one in each hand to balance the load.

Do not bend and twist simultaneously when lifting your suitcase. Be careful when getting them out of your trunk or off the conveyor belt at the airport.

Move your nose and your toes together. That is, don't pivot at the waist; pivot at your feet.

If you have back pain, ice is better to use than heat in the vast majority of cases. Ice 20 minutes at a time, with at least 40 minutes between applications. You can do this several times/day.

Take zip lock plastic baggies on your trip. It is easy to find ice, but you may need something to put it in. Double bag the ice as one bag usually leaks.

Oversized pillows may hurt your neck. You may be better to sleep on folded towels if you haven't brought your own neck pillow.

Many of our patients schedule a chiropractic adjustment just prior to leaving on their trip. This has helped them travel pain-free and enjoy the sights.

If you have recurrent back or neck pain every time you travel, consult a doctor of chiropractic. We can help you enjoy your next adventure!

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