

Staying Healthy While Travelling

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Travelling nowadays has become more of a chore than a pleasure. The airplanes seem to have narrower seats and more rows. I jokingly say that I can remember the airline I flew by looking at their insignia tattooed into my kneecaps. And to add insult to injury, the baggage fees have resulted in travelers packing more and more into their carry-ons so that putting them into overhead storage, and more importantly, taking them out, has become a health hazard, particularly for back injuries.

After having been frozen in a seat for hours, moving those stiff joints makes a lot of sense. Going back to those baggage fees, many individuals do not have the space in their carry-on luggage for gym clothes to wear to the exercise room. They think that is a good

excuse to get them out of doing something physical. That is not the case. Many exercises can be done in a hotel room without special equipment.

If you are older, sedentary, have medical conditions like heart disease, or back pain, exercise can be good for you but it is essential that you check with your personal physician before starting increased physical activity. There may be certain exercises to avoid, and it makes sense to find out about them before an injury.

These exercises can be done on the floor or on a bed. The first is the knees to chest movement. Bring up one leg at a time, count to three and relax to a count of six. Do not hold your breath when doing any of these exercises. Do both legs simultaneously if you are comfort-

able. Do no more than three repetitions if you have not completed these exercises previously.

The second exercise is for back rotation. Keep your shoulders on the surface of the bed or floor and turn your pelvis and legs with your knees together to one side and hold for one minute or as long as you can tolerate. Alternate sides and do three repetitions.

The third exercise is for hip and buttock stretching. Place your heel on your opposite knee and pull the bent knee across your body to the opposite shoulder. Hold for a count of three and then relax for a count of six. Alternate legs and do ten repetitions.

For more exercises or information about back pain, you can listen "Speaking of Health with Dr. B." 

