

## On the Road Troubleshooting

**Problem:** Traveling plays havoc with your regular workout/ exercise, the equipment in the hotel's fitness room is unfamiliar, or you're too stressed to even try to get some time in.

**Solution:** Do the best you can. There is the "ideal" and then there is the "real," but doing something is always better than nothing at all. Try to get in some kind of physical activity each day even if its just taking a fast walk around whatever city you're in.

If the hotel's gym equipment is not what you're used to, just do what you can with what's available or substitute "no equipment needed" exercises.

Minimize travel stress by planning ahead, arriving early, and allowing for the unexpected by having back up plans tucked away in the back of your mind.

**Problem:** There aren't usually a lot of choices of good places to eat in or near the hotel/motel/airport, or I don't have time for a real meal so I wind up eating too much fast food.

**Solution:** Eating healthy on the go, whether on a week-long jaunt or frequent overnight business trips, can be a major challenge. The key to staying on track is to have some food strategies in place and be prepared before you find yourself famished with nothing but fast food outlets in sight. Try packing a few zip-lock bags filled with healthy mixed nuts like almonds and pistachios and/or some whole grain cereal squares; tuck in a box of protein bars; bag a couple of apples and the little cheese balls that need no refrigeration. With just a little forethought and intelligent choices while eating out, your good eating habits don't have to be left at home. ■

### *The Traveler's Training Guide* by Kyle Battis

is an E-Book packed with powerful exercises and travel tools in a step by step "Plan for Success" that will tell you exactly how to maintain fitness levels when you are on the road. For more information go to [www.travelerstraining.com](http://www.travelerstraining.com)

# De-Stress Express

by Sabrina Svard

## 10 Quick Moves to Relieve Stress On the Job or On the Go.

Most of us carry stress in two areas – the lower back and the neck/shoulders. Aside from stressful situations, our posture and muscular imbalances have a great deal to do with tension, pain, and discomfort in these areas. Our spinal muscles are weak, yet tense, and our abdominal muscles have often been improperly trained (or not trained at all) to help support the spine and pelvis. Sitting or standing with rounded shoulders over-stretches the muscles in the upper back while shortening the pectoral (chest) muscles. This can lead to neck and shoulder pain, and sometimes even nerve impingement.

Several statistics state that 80% of Americans will have some sort of lower back issue in their lifetime. That represents 8 out of 10 people! And it's no wonder when we look at our day to day activities: We get out of bed (and some days that alone is a painful undertaking) and sit down "slumped" over while we drink our morning coffee. Then we sit in our cars and drive to work with our shoulders rounded forward and our spine curved opposite of the way that the spine should be curved. When we get to work we sit at our computers for several hours most often with the same awful posture. And then we get home and flop on the couch to watch *Survivor* – slumped over again!

Sitting is one of the worst positions for the spine as most of the compression force on the discs and vertebrae converge on the lumbar (lower back) area. Combine all this sitting with weak spinal and abdominal muscles, extra weight, and for the ladies, those fabulous high heels – and it's no wonder we are often saying "Oh, my aching back!"

Since most of us drive to work and can't quit our job just because it is literally a pain in the neck, here are some moves derived from pilates and yoga that one can use to de-stress the spine, neck, and upper back. If you wake up with a stiff lower back many of these exercises can be done while in bed or seated on the edge of the bed. Check out the modifications for "morning stretch" and start your day off feeling great.



### INCORRECT POSTURE

- Pelvis is rolled back causing the lumbar spine to be excessively flexed, leading to low back pain
- Shoulders are rolled forward which can cause upper back and neck pain
- Chin is dropped, therefore cervical spine is out of alignment, which could lead neck pain or nerve impingement
- Abdominal muscles are loose and therefore are not helping to support the spine and pelvis



### CORRECT POSTURE

- Sit up on your "SITS" bones (or ischium, the bones at the base of your pelvis); this helps to put your pelvis in a vertical or neutral position
- Head, neck and spine should be in a straight line
- Shoulders are back slightly, down and relaxed
- Eyes are on the horizon, thus keeping the neck in line with the spine