



## Mind Your Posture: Active Ageing

We are living in an era of significant population ageing and, with 2012 confirmed as the **European Year for Active Ageing by the European Commission**, it is time to pay attention to the role our posture plays in keeping us fit and active into old age.

To mark the start of **Chiropractic Awareness Week (16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April)**, the British Chiropractic Association unveils consumer research\* results that highlight the need for attention and action, no matter what age you may be:

- **One in five (20%) aged 55 and over are most worried about becoming less active as they age.**
- 48% of over 55's admit that they are a lot less active than 20 years ago.
- 51% of over 55 year olds are currently suffering from back or neck pain with 33% of those complaining that they suffer daily and 24% stating they have endured some kind of back or neck complaint for more than 10 years.

The research also explored how back and neck pain is impacting on people's daily lives. The findings revealed that 13% of those suffering from back or neck pain, aged 55+ experienced difficulties with going to work – a clear concern for the ageing workforce. Additionally, 13% found their pain impacted on their ability to socialise with friends and family. The other main areas of concern related to restrictions in carrying bags/rucksacks, carrying out DIY, exercising and sleeping.

**Tim Hutchful, BCA chiropractor comments:** "Remaining active as we age is important to our well-being and continued health. So, whilst our bodies start to slow

down naturally, there are some simple everyday steps that can be taken to help preserve your back and posture into your older years.”

Tim recommends:

- Stay as **active** as you can within your physical limitations. Some exercises that may seem daunting or only for the very fit may, in fact, be perfect in allowing you to maintain fitness and mobility if done at a 'lower' level. Adding just a few minutes of exercise or stretches to your daily routine could be of benefit.
- **Walking** is a great way to stay active and the benefits underestimated. It is less strenuous on the joints than other forms of exercise but is weight bearing and so can help maintain bone density too.
- A moving joint is likely to be less painful than a static joint, so even **simple movement**, stretches or gentle exercises could help relieve pain.
- Promoting **core** strength and positive posture by doing StraightenUpUK – a series of simple stretches and exercises is a great idea. (go to [www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk](http://www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk))
- Look to increase levels of activity in simple ways: walk to the shops instead of driving; try walking a little faster to **boost** the exercise benefit; take the stairs instead of an escalator or lift. Any additional exercise is better than none.
- Keep **fluid** levels topped up; the body works better when well hydrated: Your muscles and joints will work more efficiently and fatigue less.
- Always **consult** your doctor before embarking on new exercises to make sure they are compatible with any known medical conditions or symptoms.

*Further information about chiropractic can be obtained by logging on to [www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk](http://www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk)*

*For further information contact the British Chiropractic Association on 0118 950 5950*