

# Questions about the ideal driving position?

## We can help!

PHYSIOTHERAPY  
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*Planning a vacation or weekend getaway that involves driving? Read this...*

*Every summer our therapists are confronted with patients that need to get their bodies "fixed" before heading off on vacation. We are often asked "will I be able to drive to... [insert any city in North America] next week?" Here are some tips that we have put together that may help when planning a long drive.*

### GETTING IN

Can you get into your vehicle with ease and without twisting your back? You learn how to do this quickly when you have a sore back! Think about how you do it when you feel good and do the



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same things- keep your back straight, put your legs in carefully and ease into the seat gently, using support if necessary. You are off to a good start!

### SITTING

Once you are in and seated, analyze your sitting posture for the following:

Are your hands on the steering wheel with your wrists in a neutral (straight) position?

Are your elbows bent at about 90 degrees and slightly in front of your body?

Is the back of your head supported (or is the head rest near enough to protect your head in case of a rear-end collision; the top of the rest should be at the top of your ear level)?

Is your back and especially your lower back firmly supported?

Are your hips bent at slightly more than 90 degrees?

Does the seat support your thighs?

Can you reach the pedals with your knees slightly bent and your feet flat?

Do you feel relaxed and comfortable before you start?

### ADJUSTMENTS

Check and adjust all controls, displays and mirror vision before starting out. Are they all easy to see and reach?

Use a back support or lumbar roll if you are having back pain while driving. Try different kinds until you find something that works for you.

### DISTANCE DRIVING

When driving more than one hour, vary your posture, move around a little and change your hand position on the steering wheel. It is very

easy to become cramped and rigid unless you remind yourself to move!

Note the time spent at the wheel and set time limits to the next rest period.

Stop, get out and stretch after driving more than two hours. If you have a back problem plan to stop every half hour.

With caution, you can do simple movements and stretches of your legs, back and especially your arms as you drive.

If you feel yourself getting tense, the simplest thing to do is raise your shoulders up towards your ears, hold the position, take a deep breath and relax.

*Have a safe and comfortable drive!*



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