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THE Wii WARM UP

***The British Chiropractic Association advises how to avoid
Wii-injuries this yuletide***

At the top of Christmas wish lists up and down the country, the Nintendo Wii is in demand. Come Christmas morning those lucky enough to unwrap a 'Wii gift' could be nursing a 'Wii injury' before the turkey is even cooked! **The British Chiropractic Association (BCA) is advising that users undertake a 'Wii Warm up' before getting to grips with games.**

Wii mania first took hold in the States last month and, ever since, Wii-related injuries are becoming a more and more regular occurrence. Dispelling myths about sedentary lifestyles and computer games, the Wii is not like conventional video consoles. With built-in motion sensors, players actively control characters and actions on screen by physically playing out the actions themselves rather than slumped on a couch moving just their fingers.

Tim Hutchful from the British Chiropractic Association comments: "As chiropractors we are encouraged that this new technology allows users to be so active especially at this time of year when the tendency is to do very little except eat and watch TV! We want people to enjoy these games, but enjoy them safely. Gamers should treat a 'Wii session' like any form of exercise and warm-up adequately beforehand to prevent stiffness and possible injuries."

Hutchful continues: "Any unaccustomed exercise or activity lays yourself bare to problems that could occur from prolonged periods of active movements, so treat it like a gym work out – warming up and cooling down".

The BCA has developed a '**Wii Warm Up**' to help users retain nimble fingers but avoid over exertion:

1) **Shoulder Shrug** – Slowly shrug your shoulders towards your ears. Hold for 2/3 seconds, and then relax. Repeat 3 times. Because it is easier to relax a muscle after

you've tightened it, you will relax the muscles in the shoulder and allow the blood to flow into the arms.

2) **Wrist Stretch** – Slowly stretch the wrist backwards, hold for 2/3 seconds, then slowly stretch it forwards and hold for 2/3 seconds. Repeat 3 times. This exercise prevents tightening of the wrists.

3) **Make a Fist** – Hold the arm at right angles from the elbow. Make a fist and tense it, and the whole of your arm. Hold for 2/3 seconds, then relax and let the arm flop to your side. Repeat 3 times. This will help the blood flow and tone the muscles.

4) **Neck muscle stretch** – Try to make a double chin, to stretch the muscles at the base of the neck. Hold this position for 2 to 3 seconds and repeat 3 times. Always stretch very slowly.

5) **Lower back loosen** – Stand with your feet shoulder width apart slowly circle your hips 5 revolutions to the right and then 5 revolutions to your left.

But remember warm up exercises shouldn't be painful, so if they are stop!

Hutchful concludes "It is also important to take frequent breaks during a Wii session, at least once every 45 minutes for most people, but 20 – 30 minutes for those who do not exercise regularly. Don't forget - pain is a warning sign, so if you feel any pain no matter how slight – stop!"

For more information, or to find details of your nearest BCA chiropractor, visit

www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk or call the BCA on 0118 950 5950

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Notes to Editors

Chiropractic is a primary health-care profession that specialises in the diagnosis, treatment and overall management of conditions that are due to problems with the joints, ligaments, tendons and nerves of the body, particularly those of the spine.

*The **BCA** represents well over 50% of UK chiropractors. Chiropractic is a statutorily regulated healthcare profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council. Members of the BCA must abide by the GCC's Code of Conduct and Standard of Proficiency. The association only accepts graduates who have gone through a minimum four-year full-time internationally accredited degree course at an internationally recognised college of chiropractic education. Chiropractic care offers hands on pain management and focuses on muscles, joints and nerves. Chiropractic is suitable for all ages and can help with a wide range of aches and pains from head to toe. Chiropractors use their hands to 'adjust' or 'manipulate' the spine and joints where signs of restriction in movement are found and can also involve working on muscles. This restores normal function to the affected muscles, joints and nerves allowing the body to then get on with the job of healing itself.*