

BASHED UP BOKS BAG BARGAINS: RUGBY HEALTHCARE COSTS REVEALED

- **Essential maintenance for an English rugby player costs more than £16,000 a year; South African players would have to fork out just £6,000 for the same treatments**
- **Top-of-the-range mouth guards can set you back up to £800, yet enquiries more than triple (222%) in past 12 months**
- **Enquiries for sports massages increase five fold (418%) in the past year; deep tissue massages up 269%**
- **Physiotherapist almost three times more in England (£41) than South Africa (£14)**
- **Treatment for cauliflower ear costs an average of £2,000 in the UK**

Sunday 16 November 2014 – England might have lost by just three points to South Africa in Saturday's Autumn International, but it looks like the team's wallets might be dented even more than their pride when it comes to aftercare, according to new research by private healthcare search engine, WhatClinic.com.

WhatClinic looked at the average cost of treatments that an international rugby star might need throughout the course of a year - including deep tissue massages, sports strapping and taping, sports therapy and chiropractic sessions, amongst others. The research showed that the yearly maintenance cost for an England rugby player, without major injuries, would be £16,511 – two and a half times that of their South African counterparts (£6,269).

Should any of the England squad require knee rehabilitation, the cost per session would be £40 – more than double that of their Springbok rival (£18). Sports strapping and taping costs an average of £44 in the UK, five times more than in South Africa (£10). However, this is small change compared to one Swindon clinic that charges up to £225 for the treatment.

The average cost of a sports mouth guard in the UK is £82 but can cost significantly more, with one clinic in Devizes, Wiltshire, charging as much as £800. Despite the cost, enquiries for mouth guards have more than tripled (222%) in the past 12 months. A sports massage in England will cost you £38 a pop – a third more than in South Africa (£22), yet enquiries have skyrocketed five-fold (418%) in the past year.

In a recent survey^[1], six out of ten (59%) healthcare professionals stated that rugby players are more prone to injury than players of other sports, with almost three quarters (73%) having seen a distinct rise in sports related injuries in the past three years. Despite almost a third (31%) saying that those over 35 years of age should not play full contact rugby, a quarter (25%) stated that the most common age for injury was in those between 19 and 23 years old.

The most common rugby-related injuries seen by GP's are concussions, fracture, spinal injuries, chronic knee injuries and dislocations, while plastic surgeons listed nasal fractures, lacerations and scarring. However, one surgeon listed his youngest patient treated for cauliflower ear as being just 12 years old.

The following table shows the cost of ten maintenance treatments needed by an international rugby player, as well as the potential cost across the course of a year:

Treatment	England (£)	South Africa (£)	Treatments/sessions per year	Annual cost - England (£)	Annual cost - South Africa (£)
Physiotherapist	41	14	4	165	57
Mouth guard	82	56	1	82	56
Strapping and Taping	44	10	156	6803	1608
Sports Massage	38	22	104	3958	2309
Sports Chiropractic consultation	39	31	4	155	124
Sports Rehabilitation	38	19	4	152	76
Dental implants	2020	526	1	2020	526
Dental crowns	444	210	1	444	210
Deep Tissue Massage	49	23	52	2556	1196
Chiropractor Consultation	44	27	4	174	108
TOTAL	£2,838	£938		£16,511	£6,269

Emily Ross, director of WhatClinic.com, says: “Rugby players, especially at an international level, put their bodies through serious strain on a daily basis. Without even considering the cost of a major injury, the maintenance of keeping a player in peak physical condition can cost thousands of pounds every year.

“If you do play a lot of sport, remember just how important it is to look after yourself on and off the pitch, and always seek medical advice for strains and injuries. Concussions can be incredibly dangerous and not all players have a team of medical professionals to advise and treat.

“Should you be unfortunate enough to sustain an injury during sport, especially a head injury of any type - don't play fast and loose with your health by ignoring it. There are no winners when it comes to serious injury.”

– ENDS –

Notes to Editors:

1. WhatClinic.com surveyed over 7,000 medical professionals in November 2014 about their opinions on rugby and sports injuries on the whole

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About WhatClinic.com

WhatClinic.com is a clinic comparison site that lists over 100,000 clinics globally. In 2013 15.7 million people visited the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective, self-pay medical treatments. WhatClinic.com's mission is to give the patient, as an empowered consumer, access to all the information they need to make an informed choice, including price, availability and reviews. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King, and is in operation in over 127 countries.