

11 Tips For Good Posture

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1) Commit to changing Bad Habits

Good posture means your bones are properly aligned and your muscles, joints and ligaments can work as nature intended. It means your vital organs are in the right position and can function at peak efficiency. Good posture helps the normal functioning of the nervous system.

2) When standing

- hold your head high, chin firmly forward, shoulders back, chest out, and stomach tucked in to increase your balance. If you stand all day in a job like a cashier or clerk, rest one foot on a stool or take breaks to get off your feet for a while.

3) When sitting

- use a chair with firm low back support. Adjust the chair or use a footrest to keep pressure off the back of the legs, and keep your knees a little higher than your hips. Your chair should have armrests to alleviate pressure on the shoulders. Do not sit on a fat wallet; it can cause hip imbalance! Place computer monitors at or slightly above eye level.

4) When sleeping

- sleep on your side with your knees bent and head supported by a pillow, to make your head level with your spine. Or, sleep on your back, avoiding thick pillows under your head. Use a small pillow under your neck instead. Do not read in bed with pillows stacked behind your head pushing your chin toward your chest.

5) When lifting

- let your legs do the work in order to prevent injury to your low back. Stand close to the object, then where possible squat down and straddle it. Grasp the object, and slowly lift the load by straightening your legs as you stand up. Carry the object close to your body. Never twist from the waist while bending forward or while lifting.

6) Keep your weight down

- excess weight, especially around the middle, pulls on the back, weakening stomach muscles and resulting in back pain. Long term effects include osteoarthritis and disk degeneration.

7) Develop a regular program of exercise

- regular exercise keeps you flexible and helps tone your muscles to support proper posture. This only helps if you exercise with good posture!

8) Buy good bedding and frequently replace your shoes

- a firm mattress will support the spine and help maintain the same shape as a person with good upright posture. Shoes wear down unevenly to an unbalanced surface. This affects the arches of the feet, the knees, hips, and joints in the spine.

9) Have your eyes examined

- a vision problem can affect the way you carry yourself as well as cause eye strain.

10) Pay attention to injuries from bumps, falls and jars

- injuries in youth may cause growth problems or postural adaptations to the injury. They frequently result in pain showing up later in life.

11) - Chronic bad posture

- weakens the muscles and ligaments of the spine so that you are more likely to experience the “straw that broke the Camel’s back” type incident. These postures can be corrected by a specially trained Doctor of Chiropractic. If you follow the above tips, but still feel discomfort and pain related to specific activities, visit your Doctor of Chiropractic for a spinal checkup and a postural evaluation for yourself and for your children.