

The Wellness Express™



Jump on the train to good health

Issue 3, May 2014

Tips to Maintain Good Posture

Presented by: Total Health Systems

TotalHealthSystems.com

Introduction

Good posture is essential for good health. We recognize poor posture when we see it as it is obvious in many adults. Generally poor posture occurs as a result of bad habits, lack of exercise or due to abnormal spinal curvatures, which over years result in loss of good posture and which may result in pain. Few people have a real grasp of the importance and necessity of good posture and of investing energy and effort into obtaining and maintaining good posture.

Good posture assists us with functions such as standing, walking, sitting and lying down



by enabling us to maintain positions that place the least strain on the supporting muscles and ligaments during movement and weight-bearing activities. Good posture also keeps bones well aligned ensuring optimal use of muscles and reducing the abnormal wear and tear to joint surfaces that results in degenerative arthritis and joint pain. While good posture may seem to make muscles work harder initially, over time, good posture enables the muscles to be more efficient and use less energy actually making it easier to prevent muscle fatigue, muscle strain, muscle pain and back pain.

There are many factors that can contribute to poor posture. These include obesity, pregnancy, weak muscles associated with posture, muscular imbalance from one side to another, abnormally tight muscles, repetitive tasks, stress and high-heeled shoes or shoes that are worn out. Loss of flexibility, a poor work environment in a job that requires the holding of an abnormal posture for an extended period of time, unhealthy sitting and standing habits can also contribute to poor posture over time.

Exercise of the Week

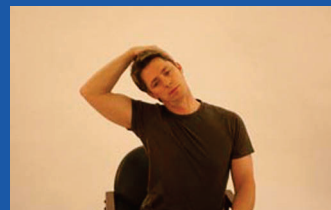
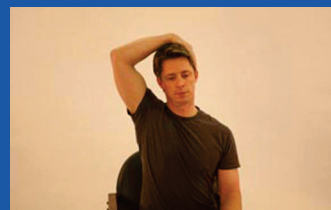
Lateral Flexion – Assisted Stretch

Difficulty: Easy to moderate

(Consult your chiropractor before doing this or any other exercise.)

Start: Sit upright in chair.

Exercise: Place one hand on top of head, with fingers pointing down toward opposite ear. Then, allow neck to relax as weight of arm pulls head and neck gently to side. You should not feel pain in this position. Drop shoulder on side you feel the stretch. Hold for 20-30 seconds. Switch sides, and repeat 2X per side.



Presented by: 43740 Garfield Road, Clinton Township (586) 228-0270
28098 23 Mile Road, Chesterfield (586) 949-0123
57911 Van Dyke Road, Washington (586) 781-0800



Sitting correctly requires keeping your feet on the floor or on a footrest. You should not cross your legs, your ankles should be uncrossed also. Having a small gap between the back of your knees and your seat is good. Your knees should be at or below the level of your hips. The back of your chair should support your low back and mid back or you should consider the use of a back support pillow. Your shoulders should be relaxed and your forearms should rest parallel to the ground. No position should be kept (even this one) for extended periods of time. You should get up and move around, stretch periodically.

Standing correctly requires keeping your weight on the balls of your feet with your knees slightly bent and not locked straight. Your feet should be shoulder width apart and you should stand straight and tall with your shoulders pulled backward and your stomach in, letting your hands hang naturally, shoulders relaxed while pulled back. Your head should be over your shoulders with your earlobes in line with your shoulders. If standing for a long period of time shift your weight from the balls of your feet to your heels or from one foot to the other as necessary while maintaining good spinal posture.

For lying down and having good posture you need to start with the right mattress. Most people do best with a firm mattress but some people find that softer mattresses reduce their back pain. Your comfort is important, as being uncomfortable will send

you looking for postures that are not necessarily good ones. While sleeping, use a pillow. Cervical pillows are available to help with postural problems resulting from a poor sleeping position and your chiropractor can help establish if this would be beneficial. With sleeping you should avoid sleeping on your stomach and should try to sleep on your side or back. If you have low back pain, using a pillow between your knees if you are on your side, or a pillow under your knees if you are on your back may make sleep more comfortable but will help keep your posture well aligned.

Chiropractic can assist you with proper posture. Adjustments help with alignment, enabling muscles to work more normally, minimizing the risk of muscle imbalance. Doctors of chiropractic can also suggest exercises to strengthen your core postural muscles and they can assist you with identifying improper postures you may have, helping you focus on having better posture during your regular daily activities.



Quote to Inspire

"I count on chiropractic sessions to keep my body aligned"

Giada De Laurentiis

True or False?

Sleeping on your stomach is not harmful to good posture

Answer: False

Finish this sentence....

Good posture can...

- A) help muscles and ligaments work without strain
- B) keep bones well aligned
- C) prevent wear and tear to joint surfaces
- D) all of the above

Answer: D) all of the above



Writer: Jenny Crosby, DC
Design: Elena Zhukova
Graphics: Maria Camille Almirañez
Production: Mike Talarico

Disclaimer: Information contained in The Wellness Express™ - Wellness Express News™ newsletter is for educational and general purposes only and is designed to assist you in making informed decisions about your health. Any information contained herein is not intended to substitute advice from your physician or other healthcare professional.