

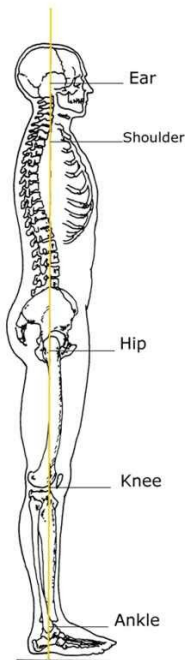
FAQs About Posture

Addison-Penzak JCC Wellness Letter

September 2011

What is Posture?

Posture is the position in which you hold your body against gravity, maintaining the normal curves of your spine, that protects your body from excess stress on any of its structures.



Negative Effects of Poor Posture

Poor posture can result in a number of health problems. Sore muscles can result from your muscles having to work harder to stabilize & protect your spine.

Abnormal spinal curvature (kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis) may develop as a result of stress being placed on the wrong sections of the spine for extended amounts of time. Vertebral subluxation (a vertebrae becomes misaligned with the rest of the spine) can occur once the spinal curve is altered, and this can cause chronic damage to the spine, including disc slippage, and spinal arthritis.

Blood vessel & nerve constriction may also occur, increasing your chance of medical problems such as deep vein thrombosis, pinched nerves, decreased circulation, and chronic pain. Poor posture has also been linked to an increase in fall risk in older adults.

*Contact the Fitness Department for more information or to schedule your posture assessment!

Phone: 408.357.7419

Email: deborahr@svjcc.org

The Benefits of Good Posture

One of the major health benefits of good posture is that it enables one to breathe properly & efficiently. When you are sitting/standing straight, your lungs are able to function to their full capacity and you are able to inhale deeper breaths with much less effort on the part of your muscles and lungs. Good posture protects your spine and also aids in maintaining proper alignment of your whole body, which can help prevent arthritis.

In addition to benefiting your back, proper posture also benefits your entire skeletal and muscular systems by association. If your spine is in proper alignment, the rest of your body falls into alignment and functions properly, putting less strain on all of your joints and muscles.

Standing with proper posture has also been shown to correlate with an increase in self esteem & confidence.

Keeping good posture requires your core muscles to work, so posture is also serving as a subtle workout for your back & abdominal muscles!

How To Improve Your Posture

First, identify your primary motivation for having good posture-this can help you stay motivated!

Follow the age-old saying of "stand up straight!" Pretend your body is held by a string from the ceiling all the time.

Get a good quality chair, bed & pillow! These help in keeping proper alignment while doing things that take up a lot of hours during the day (work & sleep).

Avoid carrying heavy items on the same shoulder or side every time. Carry your laptop bag or briefcase or purse to opposite shoulders every other day.

Get a massage! This will help to loosen up ingrained bad posture and tight muscles holding you in your bad habit posture.

Exercise daily! Strengthening your back, and core muscles will help you to achieve and maintain proper posture. Incorporate pilates, yoga, and strength training.

Get a professional assessment! Find out where your posture deviates from normal, and how to properly exercise to improve your posture for lifelong benefits!