

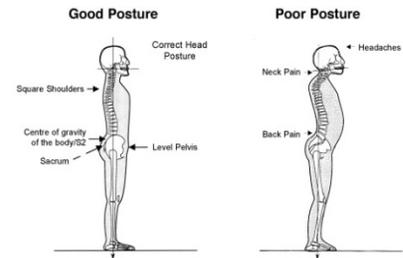
# Week 4: Posture



**Posture:** position of the human body and its orientation in space

## Good Posture

- Each body part is **aligned** with its neighbouring part
- A **vertical line** tracks from the earlobe through the shoulder, hip, knee, and middle of ankle (when in *standing*)



## Benefits of Good Posture



- ▶ Optimizes breathing
- ▶ Reduces back pain
- ▶ Can reduce the frequency of headaches
- ▶ Increases self-confidence and how confident you appear to others
- ▶ Keeps you on top of your mental game
- ▶ Lowers cortisol (stress hormone) levels

## Posture Check

1. Stand with your back against the wall.
2. Place your feet two inches from the wall.
3. Bend arms so that forearms are against the wall.
4. Maintain contact with your head, shoulder blades, upper back, and buttocks.

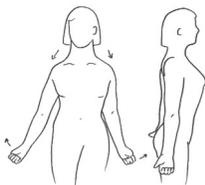
**Does your body form a straight line?**

## Exercises to Improve Posture



**Chin Tuck:** Look down and form a “double chin.” Hold for 5 sec. Repeat 5X.

**Pillow Push:** Perform in the morning. Push your head straight back into your pillow. Hold for 5 sec. Repeat 5X. Will strengthen the neck extensors.



1. Roll your shoulders down and back by squeezing shoulder blades together
2. Rotate hands outward
3. Pull your chin straight back as if trying to touch chin to neck.
4. Hold for 30 sec. Repeat throughout the day.



## Strong to the Core

**MYTH:** Performing 200 sit-ups per day will help build “6-pack abs” and strengthen your core

Your **core** is not just your abdominals. In fact, your core is made up of **29 muscles** that support the **lumbo-pelvic-hip complex** (e.g., transverse abdominis, erector spinae, gluteus maximus, external obliques).

### Benefits of a Strong Core ([webmd.com](http://webmd.com))

- ▶ Supports good posture and proper joint alignment
- ▶ More strength and power for daily activities
- ▶ Reduces risk of injury
- ▶ Strong, healthy feeling due to good posture
- ▶ Decrease in, or prevention of, low back pain
- ▶ Increases energy
- ▶ Confidence from strength and good balance
- ▶ Allows you to sit at desk pain-free

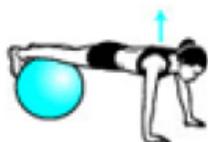
### Exercises for a Strong Core

**Instructions:** Complete two sets of 10-12 repetitions (3 days a week).



#### Stability Ball Wall Squats (Targets: Butt/hips, stabilizers)

1. Rest a stability ball (med.) between your back and a wall.
2. Squat until thighs align parallel to the floor.
3. Hold for 20-30 sec.



#### Stability Ball Push-Up (Targets: Chest, Rectus abdominus)

1. Rest your knees, shins, or feet on a stability ball (med.)
2. Place hand approx. 36 inches apart.
3. Inhale and lower chest to the floor. Keep your back flat.
4. Return to starting position.



#### Plank (builds endurance in back and stabilizer muscles)

1. Push off the floor, raising up onto toes and resting on elbows.
2. Keep your back flat – straight line from head to heels.
3. Tilt your pelvis and contract your abdominals (prevents sagging)
4. Hold for 20 -60 seconds. Lower. Repeat 3-5 times.



#### Stability Ball Sit-up (Targets: Rectus abdominus, obliques)

1. Feet flat on the floor, neck relaxed, hands supporting your head.
2. Raise shoulders off the ball while keeping elbows open.
3. Hold for 3 deep breaths. Return to start position. Repeat



#### Stability Ball Back Extension (Targets: Lower back, stabilizers)

1. Rest your midsection on a stability ball (med.). Legs are straight behind.
2. Place hands behind your head.
3. Inhale and lift torso up from waist. Body should form a straight line.
4. Exhale. Ease body back into neutral position.