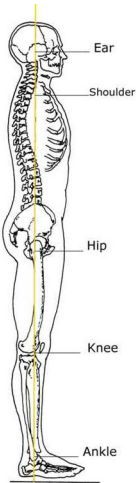




Healthy Habits Exercise Series

Week 1: Posture

Correct posture is much more than just sitting tall – it is critical to reducing the incidence and levels of back and neck pain. Did you know that for every inch that the head moves forward in posture, it increases the weight of the head on the neck by 10 pounds!? This added pressure could cause the joints of the neck to deteriorate faster than normal resulting in degenerative joint disease or neck arthritis.



What's so Bad about Bad Posture?

Poor posture can add strain to the muscles and put stress on the spine. Over time, this can cause constricted blood vessels and nerves, and problems with discs and joints. All of these can be major contributors to neck and back pain, as well as headaches, fatigue and possibly major organs and breathing.

What is Good Posture?

Correct posture is keeping each body part aligned with its neighbouring parts. When standing, you should be possible to draw a straight line from the earlobe, through the shoulder, hip, knee, and into the middle of the ankle.

Exercises and Stretches to Improve Posture

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| | <p>Chin Tuck – form a double chin while looking down. Hold for 5 seconds and do 5 times.</p> <p>Pillow Push – in the morning, push your head, straight back, into your pillow to strengthen the neck extensors. Hold for 5 seconds and do 5-10 times.</p> |
| | <p>Posture Re-Check - Stand with back against a wall. Arms are bent with forearms against the wall and keeping contact with your head, shoulder blades, upper back and glutes. Feel are only 2 inches from wall. Does everything line up?</p> <p>Posture Exercise – Same position as above. Arms start in the bent position over head. Take 3-5 seconds to climb the wall while keeping the back of your hand touching the wall. Do this 10 times to improve your posture.</p> |
| | <p>Roll your shoulders back and down by squeezing your shoulder blades together, rotate your hands outward, then pull your chin straight back as if you are trying to touch your chin to your neck. Do not bend the head forward.</p> <p>Hold for 20-30 seconds each time throughout the day.</p> |

Resources: <http://www.necksolutions.com/>, <http://www.spine-health.com/>