

REHAB NEWS



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PREVENT THE ONSET OF PAIN WITH PROPER POSTURE

Adapting proper posture is an essential part to maintaining a healthy skeletal structure as you age. Proper posture means keeping each part of the body in alignment with the neighboring parts – keeping all parts balanced and supported. As we age, our muscles and joints get stiff which often causes poor posture. It is often common to see older adults leaning and bent forward. This type of posture puts extra strain on muscles as our body attempts to maintain balance and actually causes our muscles to get even tighter over time.

According to the Mayo Clinic, good posture promotes a strong and stable spinal column and can help prevent the deterioration of the vital muscles and ligaments that keep you balanced and flexible. Poor posture has been associated with a number of health conditions such as dowager's hump, double chin, varicose veins, pinched nerves, neck pain, back pain, and many others.

Helpful Hints to Improve Posture:

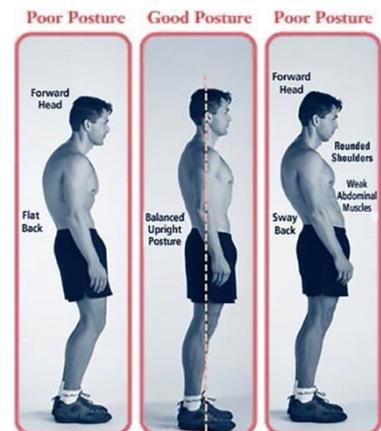
Upper Body – Stand tall when you walk. Pretend to look ahead over a crowd of people.

Low Back – Use a lumbar support when sitting.

Better Standing – A straight line from your ear, through your shoulder, hip, knee, and into the middle of your ankle for proper posture.

Forward Head – Slide your chin back as you bring your chest bone up.

Slouched – Roll your shoulders up and back, turn thumbs out.



Improve Your Posture with Physical Therapy

A physical therapist can help correct & improve your posture by designing an individualized program of exercises and activities with an emphasis on strength, flexibility, and proper gait. Your balance may be improved with exercises that strengthen the core, back, ankle, knee, and hip muscles along with exercises that improve the function of the balance system. Exercises that are focused on improving posture will stretch tight muscles and keep joints strong. If you have concerns about your posture, call your doctor and ask if physical therapy can help.