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Some Surprising Facts About Posture

Your posture is one of the first things other people notice about you and can affect so much more in your life than just spinal health. Healthy posture has been linked to better respiratory health and has even been shown to affect your confidence. In this article, we explore a few other surprising facts about posture.

Ideal posture doesn't mean having a straight back.

Many people think having good posture means standing as straight as possible with your shoulders pulled back. This is actually a relatively unnatural posture and requires a lot of energy to maintain. Ideal posture, where the spine rests in its most comfortable and strongest position, is where the neck has a gentle curve backwards, the thoracic is curved gently forwards and the lower back curves back again. These curves create an elongated 'S' shape and can be seen when viewing a person from side on.

There are four common postural patterns other than 'ideal posture'.

For those who don't have ideal posture, four common variations are seen, these are; kyphosis (excessive curve of the thoracic region), lordosis (excessive curve of the lower back), flat back (loss of the normal spinal curves) and sway back (where the pelvis is pushed in front of your centre of gravity and the upper body leans back to compensate).

Each of these postures is often accompanied by a typical pattern of joint and muscle stiffness that can lead to pain and injury. Your physiotherapist is able to assess your posture and identify any ways this may be contributing to your pain. They can also help you to change your posture with strategies to increase spinal mobility and strength.

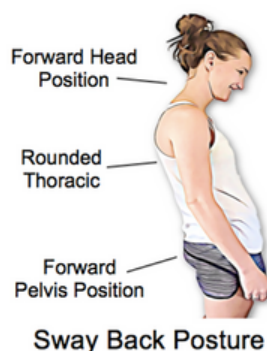
Regular movement is just as important as your posture.

While ideal posture has been shown to reduce the amount of stress and tension found in the spinal muscles, holding yourself rigidly in one position is also not healthy. Ideally, our spines will be flexible and able to move through their full range without pain or stiffness. Regular movement is the key to healthy joints, including the spine. If you find yourself sitting or standing for long periods, try to find time to stretch as well as working on your posture.

Posture can affect your ability to breathe

Your ribs are attached to the 12 thoracic vertebrae in the thoracic region of the spine. When this part of the spine is bent forwards (this is called a kyphosis) the ribs are unable to move as freely. This can impact your ability to breathe to full capacity if the thoracic spine is held permanently in this posture. In extreme cases this can affect overall health and well being as well as contribute to neck and lower back pain.

Your physiotherapist is able to provide advice and exercises to help you improve your posture based on your individual habits, muscle strength and length.



PHYSIOFUNNY.
Q. WHAT EXERCISES
DID THE PHYSIO
GIVE THE PIRATE
A. PLANKS!



Brain Teasers

What does this puzzle mean?

give	get
give	get
give	get
give	get

Hip Pain



The hip is a common area of pain referral from the lower back. Having a thorough assessment and correct diagnosis is essential for effective treatment

The Two Minute Workout Challenge

Adding movement to your day when you work in an office or at home can be difficult. When it comes to exercise, making more movement a part of your daily routine can make a big difference to your overall health if done often enough. There are a few quick and easy suggestions to add more movement to your day, starting with something as simple as boiling the kettle.

As the average kettle takes 2-3 minutes to boil, challenge yourself to see if you can complete these three exercises while waiting for your cup of tea. You can focus on one each day, or work through one different one each time.

1. Challenge your balance.

Standing on one leg is something many of us assume we can do, yet rarely take the time to check. This is an essential skill that can deteriorate without being noticed until everyday activities, such as getting dressed, are

impacted. Being able to stand on one leg is important for putting on shoes, trousers and reduced balance can be a risk factor for falls. Start by seeing if you can stand on one leg with your eyes open for the entire time the kettle is boiling.

Test both legs and if this is too difficult, make sure you are close to a bench that you can use to support yourself. To increase the difficulty, try balancing with your eyes closed, then progress to balancing on your tiptoes.

2. Heel Raises

Start by keeping your knees slightly bent and lift both heels off the ground at the same time. You can begin with repetitions of 5, have a quick rest then repeat. Challenge yourself to increase the speed of your heel raises and see how many you can fit into your waiting time. As you bend your knees, aim to keep your knees over your second toe. If you feel this is a little too easy, you can progress to single-leg heel raises, which will also improve your balance! You can start a daily competition with the people in your household to see who can complete the most.

3. Squats

Squats are a great exercise to keep your large muscles working. You can start with small squats and reps of 5, aiming to slowly increase your number and progressively squat to a lower position. As with heel raises, when you start to find squats to be less of a challenge, you can move to single-leg squats.

Don't hesitate to ask one of our physios for tips on how to stay active throughout the day. There are many more ways to fit movement into your routine.

None of the information in this newsletter is a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for advice on your individual condition.



Answers: Forgive and forget

Zucchini Bread with Camembert Dip

Ingredients:

3 cups Flour
2 tsp. Salt
1 1/2 tablespoons Baking Powder
1 tsp. Sugar
1 large Zucchini - shredded
1 small Carrot - shredded
1 small Onion - shredded
200g Butter
4 Tbsp. Oil
1/2 cup Yogurt
1/2 cup Milk
Olive Oil
1 wheel Camembert
1 clove Garlic
Fresh Herbs, chopped



1. Preheat oven to 200 degrees Celsius. Combine flour, salt, baking powder and sugar in a bowl.
2. Chop the butter and add to the flour mixture until evenly distributed.
3. Combine oil, milk, yogurt and shredded vegetables in another bowl. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix until combined.
4. Grease a round baking dish. Place a mug or ramekin in the centre of the dish. Spread batter in dish around the mug evenly. Bake for 35 minutes.
5. Chop garlic and criss-cross cut the camembert being careful not to cut all the way through. Push garlic into the slots. Remove the baking dish from the oven and remove the mug. Place wheel of cheese in the centre of the dish and bake for another 10 minutes.

Top with fresh herbs, sour cream, a drizzle of olive oil and salt and pepper.

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