

Correct Body Posture – All You Need To Know

One of the most common statements among most of us when growing up was ‘stand up straight or stop slouching.’ We probably must have heard this statement more often than we might not take it with the seriousness it deserves.

What is the correct body posture?

It is the position where you hold the body upright against gravity when sitting, standing or lying down. It involves training the body to stand, sit, lie, and walk in positions where there is the least strain if any, on the supporting muscles and ligaments during weight-bearing activities or movement. In case you have not been observing the correct body posture, here is why it is important and why you should ensure you observe it.

- Helps you avoid injuries

When you exert too much pressure on your joints, your connective tissue wears away. Therefore, your bones start to rub against each other, thus causes discomfort. In most cases, such leads to severe cases of arthritis in the end. Your spine feels the strain of poor posture as well. Too much pressure on the spine may cause a slipped disc or trapped nerve.

- Helps in proper digestion of food

When you slouch, your body puts pressure on the internal organs causing digestion to be more difficult. Poor posture is a potential cause of medical problems like constipation, hernias, and acid reflux. Therefore it is imperative to maintain the right posture while eating.

- You will defeat gravity

We all understand that gravity is a good thing. However, for those with a poor posture, gravity could be the cause of many problems. Gravity exerts a force on an individual's muscles joints as well as soft tissues all day long. With poor postures, you overburden the already burdened muscles, joints, and soft tissues. With the correct body posture, the effects of gravity will be felt evenly across the whole body. Poor gait means that some of your muscles and joints work harder than they actually should. If this continues for long, then trouble will be inevitable.

- Makes you look confident

Good posture has a huge impact on how people see you. Standing up straight helps to add height as well as authority to your figure. It makes you look slimmer and younger. A slumped gait is somewhat associated with introverted or unhappy people.

- You become the best version of yourself

Did you know that your gait affects your ability to walk, run, and other physical activities? When you improve your posture, you will be surprised at how much better shape you are. When you adopt it, it will reduce the amount of pressure exerted on your joints and muscles making your body to require less energy for performing tasks such as getting up the chair and much more. This gets one feeling fresher even after a very long day. Bad posture can make one have

difficulty maintaining their balance. A study by the University of Waterloo Ontario shows that it is vital to maintaining your balance by centering your weight over your feet.

What Causes Poor Posture

Numerous factors that one encounters can get in the way of bad posture. For most people, poor posture comes about by the daily effects of gravity acting on the body structure. Bad posture can be brought about by an injury disease or genetics. Genetics here means that the things that one cannot control. Sometimes there can be a combination of these factors. When you determine the underlying factors to less than the ideal posture will help guide you when choosing the right medical or holistic treatment. It will also help you when making lifestyle changes. Below are some possible reasons why you may have poor posture.

1. Injury and muscle guarding

When you are injured somewhere, the nearby muscles go into a spasm. They do this to protect the vulnerable area. Muscle spasm can limit your movement as well as causing pain. Spasm also keeps the injured area stable and protected from the risks of further injuries. The muscles that stay in spasm weakens over time, and the resulting imbalance between the muscles guarding an injury and those that usually work may lead to aberrations in your body posture. The muscle in spasm will work a diminished way for a while after the injury and treatment inform off massage and physical therapy will be required to bring them back to normal.

2. Your use of technology

The use of technology, whether a computer, cellphone, table etc. could quickly affect your body alignment. If for instance, you text incessantly, you may develop what's called a text neck. This is a condition whereby the neck is held in too much flexion or bending forward for too long. This brings about pain.

3. Hereditary and genetics

Poor posture could just be as a result of the genes. A case in example is the Scheuermann's Disease is common among adolescent boys makes them develop a kyphosis in their thoracic spines. In such cases, one needs to work with their doctors for both treatment and management.

4. Age

Posture gets worse as one continues to age. Posture depends heavily on the muscles supported by the legs and spine. When you age, these muscles grow weaker and weaker; thus one finds it challenging to maintain the correct body posture. You, however, can minimize the effects of age on your gait by doing exercises that strengthen your lower back.

5. Foot Placement

When feet are placed uncomfortably and unnaturally, they will affect your body posture. This becomes real especially when you have your feet rolled inwards. Your back slouches and the knees bend. If you hold that position for long, your entire body will become tired and hence affects your posture. Therefore, it is recommended to keep your feet upright at all times and put on comfortable shoes to ensure comfortable foot placement.

6. Lifestyle

The type of shoes and clothes you put on affects your posture. If you are used to putting on pencil heels, for example, you will have your posture affected. Tight clothes also could negatively impact your correct body posture. Putting low waist jeans, high heeled shoes, boots, and wide belts could also affect your gait since they affect one's center of gravity.

Tips to Having the Correct Body Posture

a) Test it and learn to stand properly

First of all, this depends on whether you are standing correctly. You can test your back and neck posture by standing against a wall. Be more aware of your feet when standing then adjust your weight to ensure it is distributed evenly across all feet.

b) Work on your core strength or do yoga

Get involved with exercises that strengthen your core, and it will make you stand taller and assist in maintaining the correct body posture. Yoga is good because it emphasizes body awareness and balance. It helps you work out to pretty poses. Pilates or any other physical exercise which focuses on your core will ensure to correct your body posture.

c) Sit at 135 degrees angle

When sitting, ensure that you have a good chair which supports your back. Find one that is ergonomic for your workspace. When you sit at a 135-degree angle, there is less strain in the spine. However, you would have to modify your workspace accordingly.

d) Adjust your posture accordingly

We need to think about our postures not just at our desks. We need to ensure that we sit up straight even when driving. To do this, we may need to adjust the rear view mirror. Also, ensure you sleep in the correct posture and use the right type of pillow and mattress. In case you are working from your bed, ensure you work in a way that does not wrench your gait. If you are in the kitchen, you may have to adjust the height of your counter so that you do not bend over.

e) Breathing properly

The way you breathe can affect how you move and how you feel. Ensure you learn how to breathe effectively using your diaphragm. Also, try breathing exercise which focuses on lengthening your spine. The exercise should engage your waist muscle as well as the lower core muscles.

f) You can use apps to improve body posture

Sometimes it's a daunting task to remember to sit and stand properly. Thankfully today, there are mobile applications that help to keep an eye on your posture. Some apps warn you in case you slouch. Also today, there are many posture trainers for both Android and iOS. However, if you are not into apps, then you can use your camera or build your posture sensor for your seat.

g) Fix your workstation

If you work on your computer for long hours or you are a DJ, you may have to set up your workstation correctly by figuring out the ideal desk height. Whether you are sitting or standing, ensure your feet are flat on the floor and you are comfortable.

Conclusion

If you are having severe posture issues, the best thing you should do is consult a doctor.

However, if you are just not well aligned, the tips you have read above will help you acquire a correct body posture and prevent pain.