

Posture and Body Mechanics

Making a difference *in people's lives*



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LIFTING

Correct Posture for Lifting an Object



BAD POSTURE

- Use a wide stance with your feet.
- Keep your butt down and your head up! Always keep your hip level below your shoulder level.
- Squat down to pick up the item. Your leg muscles are much stronger than your back muscles.
- Keep the object close to you at all times, if possible.
- Avoid twisting your spine while carrying an object. Turn your body by using your feet to change your position.
- Tighten your core muscles (like you are about to get hit in the stomach).



GOOD POSTURE



LIFTING

Correct Posture for Lifting an Object



The Half Kneel Lift

- This lift may be helpful with things that have an irregular shape or tend to move as you lift. This lift can also be useful when lifting objects from a low shelf or table.
- Stand close to the object to be lifted and squat down onto one knee.
- Keep your back straight, pick up the object, slide it up onto your thigh and then cradle the object or child against your body.
- Tighten your stomach muscles and slowly stand, using your leg muscles which are stronger than your back muscles.

LIFTING

Correct Posture for Lifting an Object

Full Golf Pick-Up

- This lift should only be done with objects that weigh a pound or less.
- This lift is performed by keeping your back straight and pivoting at your hip. Your back leg should stay straight as you reach down to pick-up the object off the floor. As you come back up from picking the object up, swing the back leg back down to the ground again.



Partial Golf Pick-Up

- This is a good way to retrieve things out of a car trunk, grocery cart or washing machine.
- When reaching into a cart, washing machine or car trunk, make sure to place one hand on stable surface and reach in while keeping your back straight and pivoting at your hips. Move the object as close to you as possible before lifting it up. It is a good idea to keep one leg straight behind you to balance your weight as you reach forward.



SITTING

Correct Posture for Sitting



BAD POSTURE



GOOD POSTURE

At the Computer

- Feet flat on the floor or on a raised object.
- Knees bend to 90 degrees at or slightly below the level of your hips.
- Keep your hips all the way back against the backrest.
- Maintain an arch in the low back - a lumbar roll helps a lot!
- Keep your upper chest up and your upper back straight.
- Keep your head over your shoulders and your chin level.
- Do NOT sit with a large wallet in your back pocket!

Make sure to get up and move around at least every 30 minutes - even if it is only for 60-90 seconds!

SITTING

Correct Posture for Sitting in a Car



BAD POSTURE



GOOD POSTURE

In a Car

- Keep the seat back as straight up as you can.
- Keep your hips all the way back against the backrest.
- Maintain an arch in the low back – a lumbar roll helps a lot.
- Keep your upper chest up and your upper back straight.
- Keep your head over your shoulders and your chin level.
- With hands on the wheel, your elbows should be bent and relaxed.
- Keep your shoulders relaxed.

STANDING

Correct Posture for Standing



BAD POSTURE



GOOD POSTURE

- Keep your knees slightly bent/unlocked.
- Maintain a neutral spine (see picture).
- Make sure that your hips are not shifting forward. There should be a fairly straight line from your ear to your shoulder to your hips to your ankle.
- If you will be standing at a counter or table for an extended period, use a small step and alternate having one foot on the step, then the other.
- Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.

Exercises to Improve Standing Posture and Reduce Pain

- Walk three to five times per week for 15-60 minutes.
- Act like there is a string pulling the top of your head up, making you as tall as possible.
- Maintain a good forward curvature in your lower back (the small arch in your lower back).
- Find your lumbar neutral position by moving through flattening and arching your back and try to find the mid point of the motion. Finding this midway position should decrease your pain in standing.
- Use a small box to put one foot up on and then switch every 5-10 minutes.
- Wear supportive and well-cushioned shoes or boots.
- Shift your weight from one foot to the other frequently.

SLEEPING

Correct Posture For Sleeping

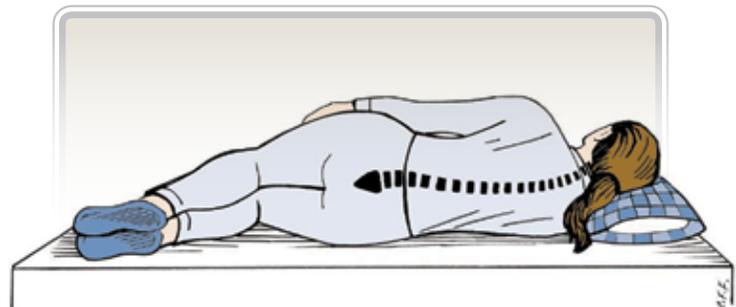
On Your Back

- Use a pillow that supports your neck and doesn't raise your head up too high. It is not generally advised to use more than one pillow unless one or both are very flat.
- Use one to two pillows under your knees.

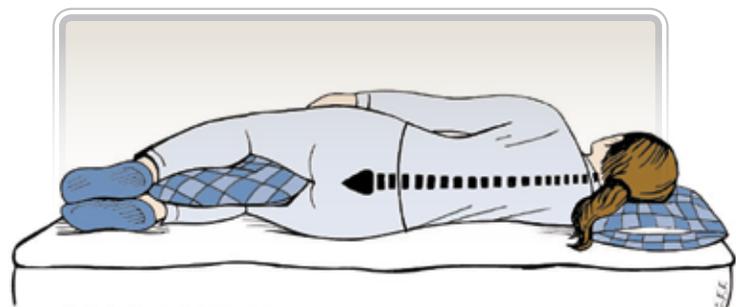


On Your Side

- Have a thick enough pillow that your neck is straight and level.
- Have a pillow in-between your knees.
- Use a body pillow if it makes your shoulder feel better and keeps you from rolling onto your stomach.



BAD POSTURE



GOOD POSTURE

ANN ARBOR • BRIGHTON • CANTON • CLINTON • HOWELL • PLYMOUTH • SALINE • YPSILANTI

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