

Health Article

Slouch too much? How to improve your posture throughout the day

It's easy to find yourself slumped over your phone or laptop for hours at a time. Over time, poor posture can have negative effects on your overall health. From staying active to stretching, these tips will help you improve your posture and stand a little taller.

MARCH 10, 2020

Share this page



By Paula Kehoe

These days, almost all of us feel the effects of poor posture. Many of us sit for long periods, lean toward computers or look down on our electronic devices.

Other factors like stress and inactivity cause muscle tension and fatigue. These can eventually lead to a range of posture-related problems, according to the Canadian Chiropractic Association. For example:

- neck pain and mid-back pain
- headaches
- rounded shoulders
- weak back and stomach muscles
- knee pain

It can also cause more serious health issues like circulation problems, heartburn and digestive issues, if left unchecked.

What is good posture?

Posture is how you hold your body when standing, sitting or lying down. Good posture, on the other hand, is when your body is positioned correctly, according to the Canadian Chiropractic Association. It means your weight is evenly balanced so that the skeleton, muscles and joints aren't overloaded or strained.

There is no gold standard for perfect posture. But the key to consistently good posture is the position of your spine. Your spine has three natural curves (at your neck, mid-back, and lower back) that form an S-shape. The muscles on each side of the spine are strong and well balanced.

However, good posture doesn't mean standing with your chest puffed out and your back and shoulders pulled back stiffly. It means you are loose and flexible with your:

- back straight
- head up above your shoulders, chin in and looking straight ahead
- top of your shoulders should be over your hips
- stomach is flat
- weight balanced evenly on your two feet
- knees straight

The benefits of good posture

There are many benefits of good posture. Research has shown that an upright posture can help you maintain a healthy weight. Studies also suggests posture can influence your hormones, help with breathing, and improvements can alleviate symptoms of depression. It can prevent pain in your back, improve your circulation, make you and less tired and help you stay mobile.

Why it's best to avoid sitting too much

Too much sitting can hurt your muscles and spine. It can also tamper with glucose levels and metabolism and it's a risk factor for type 2 diabetes.

Dr. Philip Ip, a chiropractor at Toronto's Peak Physio and Sports Rehab, says it's about the long term.

"Slouching for very short periods of time is fine," he says. "However, the negative effects of prolonged sitting will add up and cause a range of adverse health issues, not just lower back pain and bad posture."

Dr. Ip says you can prevent problems by building more activity into your day.

"Movement and mobility are key factors to preventing injuries from having bad posture. Set a timer to remind you to get up and move around every 30 to 60 minutes. Grab a glass of water, take your phone calls standing up, or try an adaptable standing desk for your computer."

Lumino Health

Back pain? Find a chiropractor near you.

SEARCH FOR

Chiropractor

NEAR

Q Search

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

AUGUST 2, 2019

6 chiropractic myths busted

14

FITNESS AND LIFESTYLE

APRIL 6, 2022

Which professional should I see for my injury?

5 min 9

FITNESS AND LIFESTYLE

AUGUST 29, 2019

How to know when to see a chiropractor

7

FITNESS AND LIFESTYLE

General tips to improve bad posture

It's nearly impossible to fix your posture completely. But you can adjust in small ways to help you sit and stand up straighter. Here are Dr. Ip's tips to improve your posture.

1. Be mindful of your posture during everyday activities, like watching TV, sitting at your desk, driving or walking.
2. Try yoga and Pilates to help strengthen the support muscles in your back and stomach and improve your posture.
3. Exercise regularly. A brisk walk for 10 minutes a day will help you improve your general health and your posture by keeping your body flexible and active.
4. Make your work space ergonomically correct to prevent back and neck pain. Look at the chair, height of monitor and where the keyboard and mouse are to ensure they are aligned. Use a desk chair with firm lower back support that also keeps to the natural curve of your spine. Try a [standing desk](#) that can allow you to work comfortably while standing up.
5. Keep your chin up when looking at your phone. Spending long periods with your head pushed forward can develop long-term neck problems. Practice looking down at your devices with your eyes alone, not bending your neck. A book stand can also help you to maintain proper posture when reading.
6. Simple [stretches](#) and [exercises](#) can relieve muscle tension and help you realign your posture.
7. Talk to a pro. If you're trying to reverse the effects of bad posture, a chiropractor can help. Chiropractors can evaluate your posture and muscle strength. Then, they can work with you on a program of exercises and stretching to reduce your risk of injury. Wondering what a chiropractor can do for you? Here's [what to expect at your first appointment](#).

Written in consultation with Dr. Philip Ip, Doctor of Chiropractic.

Read more:

- [6 chiropractic myths busted](#)
- [How to know when to see a chiropractor](#)
- [Returning to your fitness routine after injury](#)

Chiropractors by city

Calgary
Edmonton
Hamilton

Kitchener-Waterloo
Montreal

Ottawa
Toronto

Vancouver
Winnipeg


CONTRIBUTING HEALTH EXPERT(S)

Dr. Philip Ip, Chiropractor

JOIN OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

*I agree to the [Terms and conditions](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Address



Fitness and Lifestyle

Chiropractor

Sort by:

Latest Posts

Search this feed...



Nothing here yet?

Log in to post to this feed.

Sign up for the free Lumino Health newsletter.

Stay up-to-date on all things health and get exclusive offers on innovative health and wellness products and services.

Email Address

By signing up, you agree to the Lumino Health Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy.

CONTACT US

OUR PARTNERS

PRESS CENTRE

ABOUT US

PRIVACY POLICY

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

ACCESSIBILITY

SITEMAP

GENERAL FAQ

PROVIDER FAQ

PROVIDER PRIVACY POLICY

PROVIDER SUPPORT

Lumino Health
from Sun Life

