

## MAINTAINING GOOD POSTURE WITH OSTEOPOROSIS

Poor posture is one of the most common causes of back and neck pain. People who stand up straight and sit up straight all day, every day, have less risk of backache.

### **What Is Proper Posture?**

Good posture refers to the correct alignment of the body at all times when standing, sitting, walking, working and exercises. When the body is in correct alignment not only do you look and feel better, your internal organs have enough room to function normally. Blood circulates freely. With increased awareness, good posture becomes more natural as your muscles become stronger that protect and support the spine.

### **Types of Poor Posture?**

The most common types of poor posture are *Lordosis, Flatback and Kyphosis*. Lordosis, also known as swayback, is characterized by an exaggerated arch in the lower back, with the chest coming far forward and the buttocks protruding back. Flatback or the "too straight back" is where there is not sufficient thoracic curve. Kyphosis is common in people who perpetually slouch. The muscles of the chest are shortened and flexibility is reduced. This posture puts too much pressure on the lower back and contributes to back problems.

### **Check your posture frequently throughout the day!**

Knowing what good posture is isn't enough. You have to practice it. It isn't easy to change years of bad habits, but you must concentrate on maintaining good posture at all times.

**Tips for standing posture:**

- Stand up tall and don't slouch.
- Pull your chin in and relax your shoulders down and back.
- Lift your chest forward and up.
- Draw in and tighten your abdominal muscles.
- Keep your knees relaxed and slightly bent.
- Stand on a cushioned mat.
- Ease tension in your back by placing one foot up and on a foot stool.
- Raise or lower work surfaces.
- If you stand for long periods of time, wear flat or low-heeled shoes.

**Tips for sitting posture:**

- Use a lumbar support (a rolled up towel) to support the natural curve in your lower back.
- Sit evenly on both buttocks.
- Adjust your chair height to keep your knees level with your hips.
- Ensure that your feet are fully supported, flat on the floor or on a footrest.
- Avoid leaning forward with your upper body.
- Don't slouch. Chronic slouching puts stress on the muscles and ligaments. This can lead to muscle imbalances which affect your posture and can cause pain.
- Try not to stay seated for long periods of time; get up and move around; stretch.

**Tips for sleeping posture:**

- *Sleeping on your back:*  
Place one pillow under your head and neck and another pillow under your knees, to support the natural curves of the spine.
- *Sleeping on your side:*  
Place one pillow under your head and neck and another between your bent knees, again, supporting the natural curves of the spine
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach; this causes your lower back to arch and forces your neck to the side in an unhealthy position.