

COMMON POSTURE MISTAKES AND FIXES

Tension in the muscles can be caused by poor sitting and standing habits.

Here are 8 common posture mistakes and how to correct them with strength and stretching exercises.

As Physios we often see common posture patterns that may not be the full cause of back, neck, shoulder pain etc but certainly get identified as contributing factors. Correcting your posture may feel difficult at first but with practise we hope that improved posture can become second nature and help your spine in the longer term



1: SLUMPING WHILE SITTING

Slouching doesn't always cause discomfort, but over time this position can place strain on already sensitised muscles and soft tissues.

It is worthwhile to get into the habit of sitting correctly.

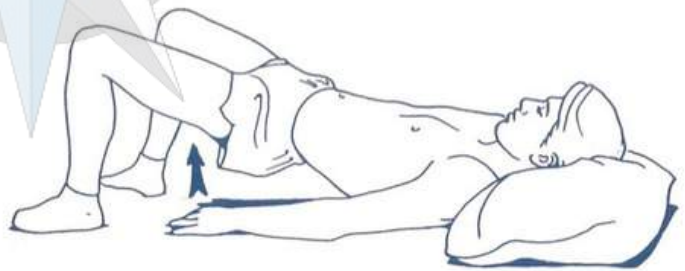
Exercises to strengthen your core and buttock muscles, and back extensions, will help correct a slouching posture.

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Exercises to correct a slumping posture:

Bridges
Back extensions
Plank



2. STICKING YOUR BOTTOM OUT

Wearing high heels, excessive weight around the stomach and pregnancy can all contribute to an exaggerated lordosis posture. This is an exaggerated inward curve of the lower back



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Exercises to correct this posture:

Plank

Side-lying leg raises

Hip flexor stretches

Standing thigh stretch



POSTURAL CORRECTION TIPS

To help correct your standing posture, imagine a string attached to the top of your head pulling you upwards.

The idea is to keep your body in perfect alignment, maintaining the spine's natural curvature, with your neck straight and shoulders parallel with the hips:

Keep your shoulders back and relaxed

Pull in your abdomen

Keep your feet about hip distance apart

Balance your weight evenly on both feet

Try not to tilt your head forward, backwards or sideways

Keep your legs straight, but knees relaxed

3. STANDING WITH A FLAT BACK

This posture is often contributed to by muscle imbalances. Spending long periods sitting down can cause bad habits of flattening your back. As you slouch and tilt your pelvis posteriorly.



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A flat back also tends to make you lean your neck and head forwards, which can cause neck and upper back strain.

Exercises to strengthen your core, buttocks, neck and rear shoulder muscles, and mobilising back extensions, are recommended to help correct a flat back.

A flat back means your pelvis is tucked in and your lower back is straight instead of naturally curved, causing you to stoop forward. People with a flat back often find it difficult standing for long periods.

Exercises to correct a flat back:

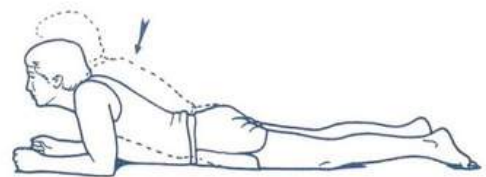
Plank

Side-lying leg raises

Chest stretches

Seated rows in a gym, or pull-ups

Back extensions cobra



4.LEANING ON ONE LEG



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Over time, you may develop muscle imbalances around the pelvis area, which can cause muscular strain in the lower back and buttocks. Leaning more on one leg while standing can feel comfortable, especially if you have been standing for a while. But instead of using your buttocks and core muscles to keep you upright, you place excessive pressure on one side of your lower back and hip.

Other causes of uneven hips may include carrying heavy backpacks on one shoulder, and parents carrying toddlers on one hip.

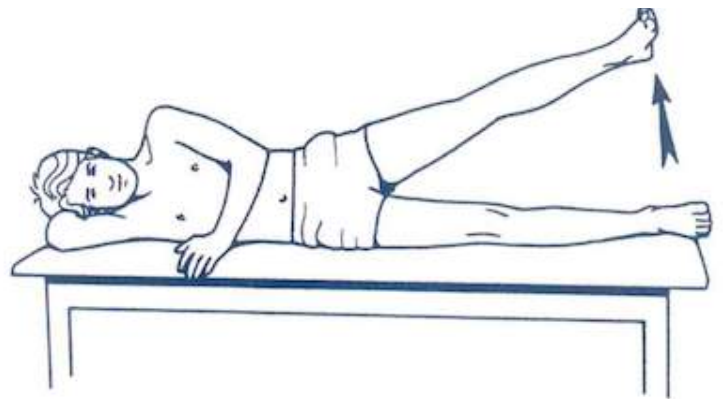
To improve this posture, try to get into the habit of standing with your weight evenly distributed on both legs.

Exercises to strengthen your buttocks and core muscles will help correct uneven hips:

Plank

Side-lying leg raises

Bridges



5. HUNCHED BACK AND 'TEXT NECK'



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Hunching over a keyboard can predispose a tight chest and a weak upper back. Over time, this type of posture can contribute to you developing a rounded upper back, which can cause shoulder and upper back stiffness. When bent over a computer, your head may tend to lean forward, which can lead to poor posture. Using a mobile can cause similar problems dubbed "text neck". Upper back, neck and rear shoulder strengthening exercises, chest stretches and neck posture correction are recommended to help correct a hunched back.

Exercises to correct a hunched back:

Gently lengthening your neck upwards as you tuck in your chin and retract your neck

Seated rows in a gym or pull-ups

Anterior chest stretches



6.FORWARD HEAD POSTURE



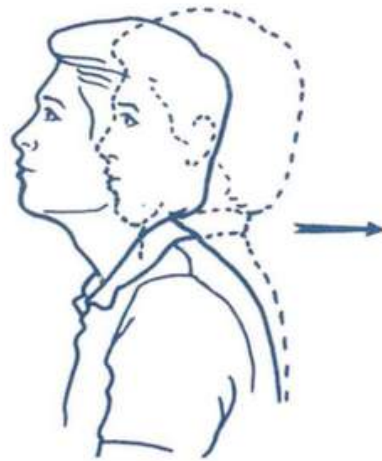
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The poking chin characteristic of a forward head posture can be caused by sitting too low, a screen set too high, a hunched back, or a combination of all three. Correcting a poking chin involves improving your sitting habits and exercises to correct your posture.

How to correct a poking chin:

Gently lengthen your neck upwards
as you tuck in your chin
Bring your shoulder blades down and
back towards your spine
Keep your mouse close
Pull in your lower tummy muscles to
maintain a natural curve in your
lower back
Adjust your seating



7. STOOPED AND ROUNDED SHOULDERS



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Rounded shoulders are typically caused by poor posture habits, muscle imbalances and focusing too much on certain exercises, such as too much focus on chest strength while neglecting the upper back.

One way to tell if you have rounded shoulders is to stand in front of a mirror and let your arms hang naturally by your sides.

If your knuckles face forward, it may indicate that you have a tight chest and a weak upper back, giving the appearance of rounded shoulders.

Exercises to strengthen your core, upper back and chest muscles will help correct rounded shoulders:

Plank

Scapular retraction

Bridges

Seated rows in a gym or pull-ups

Chest stretches



8. CRADLING YOUR PHONE BETWEEN EAR AND SHOULDER



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Holding your phone between your ear and shoulder places strain on the muscles of the neck, upper back and shoulders. The neck and shoulders are not designed to hold this position for any length of time.

Over time, this posture can place strain on the muscles and other soft tissues, and lead to muscle imbalances between the left and right side of your neck, closing down one side and stretching the opposite one.

Try to get into the habit of holding the phone with your hand, or use a hands-free device.

Exercises for neck stiffness and pain:
chest stretches

Neck stretches – gently lower your left ear towards your left shoulder; Hold for 10 to 15 deep breaths, then repeat on opposite side

Neck rotations – slowly turn your chin towards one shoulder; hold for 10 to 15 deep breaths, then repeat on opposite side



If you are unfamiliar with the correct way to do any of the recommended exercises please speak with our Physios or Exercise Physiologist who can advise you on correct technique and quantity.

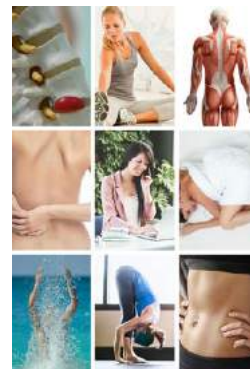
HOW CAN PHYSIOTHERAPY HELP WITH POSTURE

- Our Physiotherapists can analyse your posture to identify your problems and identify the areas that require improvement. We can watch, video and use "posture zone "analysis to further assess the contributing factors. Detailed examination of back, hips, knees, ankles and feet to further understand their role.
- Help you to understand why you have altered posture, how to improve it and provide treatment.
- Address the musculoskeletal and biomechanical factors that might be painful or limiting.
- Improve your strength.
- Improve your mobility
- Improve your balance
- Reduce your risk of aggravating injuries.

OTHER RESOURCES

Back pain is a common factor with altered walking postures. As Physios, we provide extensive education as part of our management and prevention programs, but realize not everyone can find the time or have the confidence to make an appointment.

**If you are interested in extensive tips,
prevention and management of back pain
you can access our free E-book Resource just
click this link or image**



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CONTACT US ONLINE HERE if you would like an appointment

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