



# A natural way to good health

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## Info:

- What are the reasons for poor posture?
- What are the most degenerative activities?
- Law of physics affects the body 24hrs a day!
- Stresses!!!
- Muscle imbalance?

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### “Posture” a constant challenge!

In short, “the correct posture consists of alignment of the body with maximal physiological and biomechanical efficiency, which minimizes stresses and strains on our body in response to the effects of gravity”.

In a text book this looks easy, but we all know in real life posture is a daily challenge.

As children, most of us have flowing movement and proper posture, however over the years we begin to lose that natural

acquire bad habits that lead to postural dysfunction, there are many reasons for this;

Sitting for a pro-longed period of time.

Head forward while extensively viewing a computer screen.

Unconsciously imitating our parents or other siblings/peers.

Physical and emotional injuries that lead to compensatory postures.

A sedentary lifestyle accelerates postural degeneration.



Sitting in a slouched position for hours is probably one of the most degenerative activities we can engage in.

### Slouching!!!

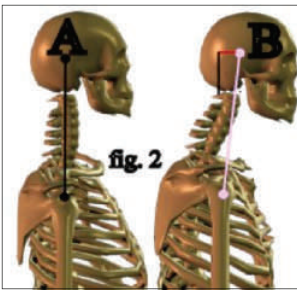
In our present day probably close to 90% of adults have some form of dysfunctional posture such as slouch.

Slouching actually puts strains on the whole

body and impedes many bodily functions causing contracted and shortened muscles in the back of the neck, and chest. Further, the natural curvature of our spine, the “S-Curve”

loses its shape and pliability causing incessantly tensed muscles. These tensed muscles throughout the body overload the nervous system.

## Accelerated degenerations...



**Subject A** reflects a normal, neutral lateral posture.

**Subject B** demonstrates the classic FHP profile, with the red line representing the amount of forward head travel.

Tensed muscles can lead to hyper tension by increasing the demand to our heart, and restrict our breathing functions. Our visceral organs are also compromised because of the compression from the caved in chest wall which disrupts the digestive system, leading to increase in auto-intoxication. In short, poor posture accelerates degeneration. Improper posture CAN be corrected and the process is the same as changing any other pattern or habit – we replace old habits with more

functional ones. In the process one develops increased awareness of how they are carrying themselves.

Remedial exercises are within the scope of practice of massage therapists of Ontario. Do not hesitate to ask your RMT questions about self care exercises including; stretches and strengthening.

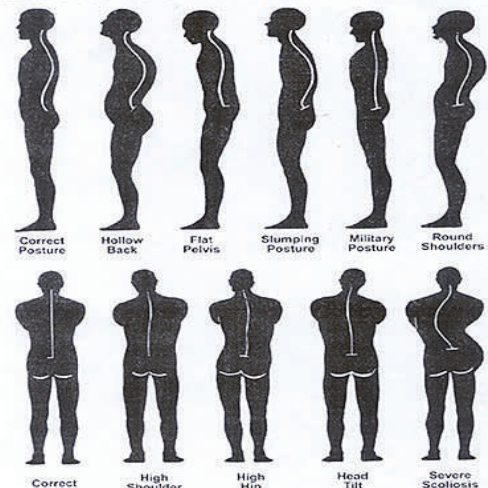
A natural way to good health!



### Long-term effects of forward head posture (FHP) include:

- Rounding of the shoulders = weakness of upper back muscles
- Inward rotation of the arms = muscle imbalance
- Compressed thoracic cavity = shortening of chest muscles
- Likelihood of an increased lumbar lordosis = lower back tension
- Loss of range of motion = interferes with daily activities
- Increased wear on the IVD, and other articular components = spine
- Increased muscle tension in some areas causing "short weakness"
- Decreased muscle tension in some areas causing "stretch weakness"

### LOOK AT YOUR POSTURE... OTHERS DO



### The Effects of Forward Head Posture on Health

The head, about the shape and weight of a bowling ball, is subject to the same Laws of Physics as other objects. As the head moves outside its natural stable point, gravity takes hold and wants the head to hit the floor. Think of a bowling ball with a cut-off broom handle stuck in one hole. The ball will balance

when the broom handle is upright, but tilt the handle slightly forward and the bowling ball will fall to the ground. Gravity never sleeps. This Law of Physics affects the body 24 hours a day.

Rene Calliet, MD estimated that for each inch the head is held forward of neutral,

requires the exertion of 15 to 30 pounds of extra muscle tension to hold the head erect, which means that much less muscle strength is available to support outside loads. And, of course, this extra muscular load is transmitted down the spine, increasing chronic loading on the vertebrae as well as the intervertebral discs.

## Here Is What neutral Posture Accomplishes:

- Stretches the front upper body tissues
- Shortens the back tissues
- Stimulates the spinal postural muscles
- Increases circulation
- Opens up the chest region, increasing respiratory functions
- Alleviates upper AND lower back, shoulder and neck pain
- Relieves muscle tension
- Improves posture by aligning head, neck and upper body in correct position
- Reduces slouching, improving self confidence

richard auger MT  




## Contributor factors

### Postural Stresses

Lying down watching TV or reading  
 Prolonged immobility  
 Bent-forward slouching position  
 Slouch sitting position  
 Sitting w/o lumbar or back support  
 Sitting w/o feet touching the floor

### Mechanical Stresses

Skeletal asymmetry  
 Joint dysfunction  
 Short upper arms  
 Muscle constriction  
 Misfitting furniture

### Occupational Stresses

Too few breaks  
 Too little movement  
 Cross eye/hand dominance  
 Work station ergonomics  
 Physical demands  
 Dislike job

### Family/Social Stresses

Loss of income  
 Medical expenses  
 Diminished capacity to care for home/  
 children  
 Strained relationships  
 Decreased physical activity

### Sleep Stresses

Sleeping on stomach  
 Sleeping w/ arms overhead  
 Pillow too high or low  
 Jaw clenching  
 Poor sleep from emotional factors  
 Poor sleep from pain

### Psychological Stresses

Loss of independence  
 Loss of control  
 Depression  
 Anxiety/fear  
 Post-traumatic stress disorder

### Nutritional Stresses

Skipping meals  
 High carbohydrate diet  
 Suboptimal levels of vitamins/minerals  
 Food sensitivities  
 Caffeine, nicotine, alcohol

### Medical Stresses

Chronic infections  
 Allergies  
 Chronic fatigue syndrome  
 Arthritis  
 Chronic illness from virtually any cause

**A loaded  
 backpack  
 should not  
 exceed 15% of  
 the carrier's  
 body weight,  
 or ever  
 exceed 25  
 pounds.**





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## Muscle imbalance...

The primary problem of muscle imbalance will lead to more serious problems over the course of many years. If your neck is crooked, the mechanics of the spinal joints are changed. They do not move evenly. This likely increases the speed at which they degenerate later in life. Degenerative arthritis is a universal human condition — everybody develops it eventually, to some degree. But some people develop it much more quickly than others, possibly because of poor posture.

There is one important barrier to the effectiveness of self-awareness: **muscle imbalance and dysfunction**. Once poor posture is entrenched, it makes it difficult to feel the goodness in a good posture. How are you supposed to recognize the good feeling of a good posture if the muscles you need to get there are atrophied, and all the rest are riddled with knots? In fact, you can't. Good posture doesn't feel good until you are properly conditioned, and it can take a long time to condition musculature that you habitually do not use and hate to use.

The combination of active and passive therapy is very powerful. Muscle dysfunction is addressed on the massage table, which makes it easier to exercise. Muscle weakness is addressed with exercises, which makes it easier to massage.

In our next newsletter we will cover more details about a neutral posture and look at ergonomics while sitting, lifting and other daily activities.

**For more details or to book an appointment call 905-460-4824**

Thanks.

Richard Auger

## It may be time!

Sometimes poor posture is just a bad habit, or the result of years and years of hunching over computer keyboards or carrying around extra weight. Many people also struggle with having the confidence or self-esteem often times needed to hold a head up high, but whatever lies at the root of poor posture, for those experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, **it may be time to address the issue and straighten up a little.**

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