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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Exercises To Keep Your Good Posture

Whether you are a child, student, or an adult, posture should rank right up at the top of the list when you are talking about your health. It is as important as eating right, exercising, and getting a good night's sleep. Having good posture prevents your body from wasting energy and allows you to complete your day with less stress and fatigue. Last week I discussed how posture could effect a student's performance in school. That article can be viewed on our website: www.merrittchiro.com. This weeks article will take the topic of posture one step further and discuss what good posture is while sitting and some helpful but simple exercises. The following diagrams were taken from "3M Office Ergonomics Self-Help Site"



Figure 1 – This is what good posture looks like from behind. When seated, your shoulders should not be elevated or shrugged. They should hang comfortably. Your elbows should hang close to your body. If possible, have your elbows supported by the armrests of a chair.

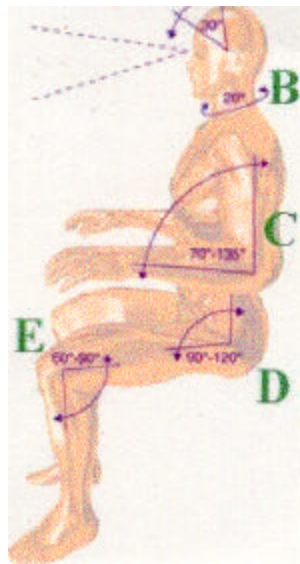


Figure 2 – This is what good posture looks like from the side. When sitting, there are ranges of movements that each body part can safely work within. If you exceed these ranges repetitively, physical problems can occur. The head and neck should not bend forwards more than 30 degrees (A) and not rotate more than 20 degrees (B). The elbows should work within the 70 to 135 degree range (C). Again, the shoulders should be relaxed hang near your torso. The hip should be in the 90 to 120 degree range (D). The knee should be in the 60 to 90 degree range.



Figure 3 – These are simple neck exercises to prevent stiffness. Looking straight ahead, bend your head to the right shoulder and hold for five seconds. Repeat on the left side. Then turn your head slowly and completely to the left. Hold for five seconds and repeat on the other side. Then bend your head forwards slowly and completely. Hold this for five seconds. Repeat all of these exercises three times.

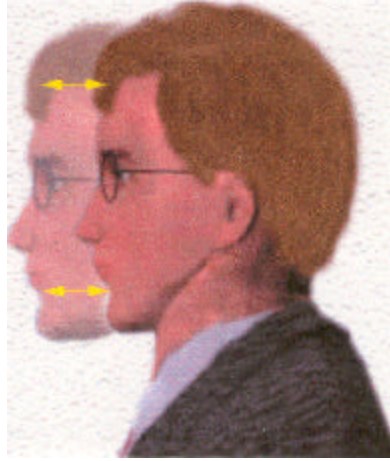


Figure 4 – Do this exercise while sitting upright and looking straight ahead. Keeping your head and ears level, glide your head backwards as far as it will go and hold for five seconds. Then glide your head forward in the same manner and again hold for five seconds. Repeat this five times.



Figure 5 – Do this exercise while sitting in your chair. Lock your hands behind your head with your elbows at the same level as your ears. Press your elbows backward as far as possible, squeezing your shoulder blades together. Hold this for three seconds and then relax. Repeat this five times.

In addition to the above postural guidelines and exercises, you must keep your body weight down, develop a regular program of exercise, buy a good firm mattress, have your eyes examined regularly, and tend to injuries from bumps or falls that may cause postural adaptations due to pain or stiffness.