

Dr. Colin Gage

Nicola Valley Chiropractic
2076A Granite Ave.
P.O. Box 909
Merritt, BC
V1K 1B8

Ph: (250) 378-5456
Fax: (250) 378-8259
Email: info@merrittchiro.com
Website: www.merrittchiro.com

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

Self-Test for Posture

How good your posture is on a daily basis is one of the main determining factors in how healthy your neck and back will be. You can undergo chiropractic treatment practically on a daily basis but if you remain inactive and have terrible posture there is not much anyone can do to relieve your neck or back pain. Just keep this in mind when you are sitting or standing at work or at home. To determine how good your posture is, use the following tests to help you determine where you "stand":

The Wall Test - Stand with the back of your head touching the wall and your heels six inches from the baseboard. With your buttocks touching the wall, check the distance with your hand between your lower back and the wall, and your neck and the wall. If you can get within an inch or two at the low back and two inches at the neck, you are close to having excellent posture. If not, your posture may need professional attention to restore the normal curves of your spine.

The Mirror Test - (Front view) Stand facing a full length mirror and check to see if:

1. your shoulders are level
2. your head is straight forward as well as level
3. the spaces between your arms and your hips seem equal
4. your hips are level or the same height
5. your kneecaps face straight ahead, not turned in or outward
5. your ankles are straight.

(Side View) This is much easier to do with the help of another or by taking a photo. Check for the following:

1. head is erect, not slumping forward or backwards
2. chin is parallel to the floor, not tilting up or down
3. shoulders are in line with ears, not drooping forward or pulled back
4. stomach is flat
5. knees are straight
6. lower back has a slightly forward curve (not too flat or not curved too much forward, creating a hollow back).

Lifestyle Tips for Lifelong Good Posture

- Keep your weight down - excess weight, especially around the middle, pulls forward on the back, increasing the curve in the low back and weakening stomach muscles.
- Develop a regular program of exercise - regular exercise keeps you flexible and helps tone your muscles to support proper posture.
- Buy good bedding - a firm mattress will support the spine and help maintain the same shape as a person with good upright posture.
- Pay attention to injuries from bumps, falls and jars - injuries in youth may cause growth abnormalities or postural adaptations to the injury or pain that can show up later in life.
- Be conscious of where you work - is your chair high enough to fit your desk? Do you need a footrest to keep pressure off your legs?
- Straighten Up and Stay Healthy!

What does perfect posture look like?

Perfect standing posture is when the following are properly aligned--the points between your eyes, chin, collarbone, breastbone, pubic area and midpoint between your ankles;

From the side, you can easily see the three natural curves in your back;

From the front, your shoulders, hips and knees are of equal height;

Your head is held straight, not tilted or turned to one side;

From the back, the little bumps on your spine should be in a straight line down the center of your back.

Particularly in conjunction with regular exercise, chiropractic treatment can play a significant role in correcting and maintaining good posture. When good posture is maintained, the daily physical stress the spine is exposed to is distributed evenly throughout its length, rather than being concentrated in a few specific spots. This prevents irritation of the joints and early degeneration of the disks.