



newbury
CHIROPRACTIC CENTRE

FOCUS ON CONDITIONS:

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD POSTURE



CHIROPRACTIC:
SAFE & EFFECTIVE TREATMENT

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THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD POSTURE

Your posture is the position in which you hold your body during certain activities. Having good posture is important for all activities, not just standing and sitting. Good posture can give you a mechanical advantage and reduce strain on certain parts of your body that are prone to injury. It is particularly important during physical activities such as manual labour, gardening and sport (at all levels).

What is good posture?

A good standing posture is one where your tummy is pulled in slightly with your chest out, shoulders back and chin slightly tucked in, with the weight evenly distributed between both feet. From a side view, it should be possible to draw a straight line that intersects the opening of your ear, the middle of your neck, the middle of the lumbar spine, your hip joint, your knee and through the bony lump on the side of your ankle (lateral malleolus).

A good sitting posture is one where you hold your upper body upright, maintain a slight arch in your lower back, have your shoulders back, chest out and neck upright with your chin slightly tucked in. Both feet should be planted on the floor (legs not crossed). For other activities such as playing golf, for example, the spine should be almost straight from the side, not c- or too s-shaped. Note that each activity you undertake has an optimal posture.

Why is poor posture such a bad thing?

Having a 'poor' posture can put your muscles, ligaments and joints under undue pressure which can lead to pain and fatigue. Sitting with poor posture can lead to back pain, sciatica, neck-, shoulder- and arm pain. A poor standing posture can have the same effects and, if you stand with your feet pronated (flat feet), this can lead to foot-, ankle-, knee and hip pain.

Note that if you sit with your lower back in a slumped posture you put significantly more pressure on your spinal discs. You also compress your internal organs, which may have an effect on bowel motility.



Do I have a poor posture and, if so, why? Give the following a try:

1. Stand in front of a mirror and adopt a 'good' posture as described above. This may feel very strange; you might even feel a bit self-conscious standing in this new position, but if you are able to achieve this 'good' posture, you don't have a problem with joint or spinal flexibility. It is therefore likely to be habitual.
2. If you can, hold this good standing posture for a few minutes. If you feel certain parts of your body starting to ache this is most likely due to muscle fatigue as a result of poor endurance of your postural muscles.
3. If you find you are unable to adopt a good standing posture at all it may be a sign that you lack the mobility to do it, either because of joint restriction, pain or muscle and ligament shortening.
4. If you find you feel less pain when holding a good posture it may be that your bad posture is a direct cause of the pain, or at least part of the cause.

How can I improve my posture?

With reference to the above, if points 1 and 2 are true for you then you will improve by (a) holding that 'good' posture more often until you are able to do it all the time, and/or (b) by doing specific postural exercises to strengthen your muscles. Your chiropractor can advise on suitable exercises for you.

If point 3 is true for you, speak to a chiropractor who may recommend treatment to help you, combined with an exercise programme. The chiropractor will undertake a thorough evaluation and address the underlying problem with you.

If point 4 is true for you, you should try to adopt your 'good' posture immediately and continue with it. If your pain doesn't subside or you feel unable to maintain your posture for any length of time, consult your chiropractor.

Exercise and Posture

Your posture is very important, but good posture is not the answer to all musculoskeletal problems. The human body needs exercise to function well. Poor core-muscle control and endurance of the postural muscles increase the likelihood of sustaining an injury. Your muscles protect your joints and ligaments, and exercise is the only thing that can help to improve muscle control and endurance. Speak to your chiropractor about self-help exercise and rehabilitation programmes.

FAQs ABOUT CHIROPRACTIC



What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic is the third largest primary health care profession in the world after medicine and dentistry.

Who regulates the profession?

In the UK, Chiropractic is a fast-growing, independent profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council.

How does it work?

Chiropractic places its emphasis on the diagnosis and management of problems affecting the nerves, muscles and joints of the body.

What can Chiropractors do?

Most people associate Chiropractic with the treatment of back pain, neck pain and headaches but Chiropractors treat many other conditions as well, including most ailments and complaints affecting feet, knees, hips, arms, shoulders and hands.

Chiropractors use an holistic approach that takes into consideration your overall health and lifestyle.

Although best known for manipulating joints (also known as 'adjusting'), Chiropractors utilise a number of different procedures in the course of patient care such as heat, cold, electrical stimulation, ultrasound, traction, postural support, exercise programmes and dietary management.

How can I find out more?

For more information on Chiropractic and to find out how your Chiropractor can help you, please contact us on **01635 48088**.