



**BURLINGTON  
CHIROPRACTIC**  

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**& WELLNESS CENTRE**

## **Guidelines to Improve Posture**

### **Sitting posture for office chairs**

- Be sure the back is aligned against the back of the office chair. Avoid slouching or leaning forward, especially when tired from sitting in the office chair for long periods
- For long term sitting, such as in an office chair, be sure the chair is ergonomically designed to properly support the back and that it is a custom fit
- When sitting on an office chair at a desk, arms should be flexed at a 75 to 90 degree angle at the elbows. If this is not the case, the office chair should be adjusted accordingly
- Knees should be even with the hips, or slightly higher when sitting in the office chair
- Keep both feet flat on the floor. If there's a problem with feet reaching the floor comfortably, a footrest can be used along with the office chair
- Sit in the office chair with shoulders straight
- Don't sit in one place for too long, even in ergonomic office chairs that have good back support. Get up and walk around and stretch as needed

### **Standing posture**

- Stand with weight mostly on the balls of the feet, not with weight on the heels
- Keep feet slightly apart, about shoulder-width
- Let arms hang naturally down the sides of the body
- Avoid locking the knees
- Tuck the chin in a little to keep the head level
- Be sure the head is square on top of the neck and spine, not pushed out forward
- Stand straight and tall, with shoulders upright

- If standing for a long period of time, shift weight from one foot to the other, or rock from heels to toes.
- Stand against a wall with shoulders and bottom touching wall. In this position, the back of the head should also touch the wall - if it does not, the head is carried too far forward (anterior head carriage).

### **Walking posture**

- Keep the head up and eyes looking straight ahead
- Avoid pushing the head forward
- Keep shoulders properly aligned with the rest of the body

### **Driving posture**

- Sit with the back firmly against the seat for proper back support
- The seat should be a proper distance from the pedals and steering wheel to avoid leaning forward or reaching
- The headrest should support the middle of the head to keep it upright. Tilt the headrest forward if possible to make sure that the head-to-headrest distance is not more than four inches.

### **Posture and ergonomics while lifting and carrying**

- Always bend at the knees, not the waist
- Use the large leg and stomach muscles for lifting, not the lower back
- If necessary, get a supportive belt to help maintain good posture while lifting
- When carrying what a heavy or large object, keep it close to the chest
- If carrying something with one arm, switch arms frequently
- When carrying a backpack or purse, keep it as light as possible, and balance the weight on both sides as much as possible, or alternate from side to side
- When carrying a backpack, avoid leaning forward or rounding the shoulders. If the weight feels like too much, consider using a rolling backpack with wheels.

### **Sleeping posture with mattresses and pillows**

- A relatively firm mattress is generally best for proper back support, although individual preference is very important

- Sleeping on the side or back is usually more comfortable for the back than sleeping on the stomach
- Use a pillow to provide proper support and alignment for the head and shoulders
- Consider putting a rolled-up towel under the neck and a pillow under the knees to better support the spine
- If sleeping on the side, a relatively flat pillow placed between the legs will help keep the spine aligned and straight.

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