



How Physical Therapy Can Help Your Posture



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How Physical Therapy Can Help Your Posture

Do you catch yourself slouching throughout the day? Do you notice your spine gets sore those last couple hours of the school or workday? If you are experiencing aches and pains, especially in your neck or back, your poor posture may be to blame.

Most of us spend our day staring at a computer screen, riding in our car, or looking down at our phones. These slouched postures with our heads tilted forward or looking down cause stress to the muscles and joints of the neck and back. The worse your posture is, the more intense your back and neck pain can become. Fortunately, your posture can improve with the help of physical therapy. Call Boulet Physical Therapy today to learn more about how you can improve your posture and lead a pain-free, active life!

WHAT ARE THE NATURAL CURVES OF YOUR SPINE?

Our spines are made up of four natural curves: the cervical, thoracic, lumbar, and sacral. When the spine is in its natural position, the vertebrae stack up over one another, and we call this "good posture" or sometimes "neutral spine."

These natural curves, along with the intervertebral discs, absorb and distribute stresses from everyday activities such as sitting, standing, walking, or more intense activities such as running and jumping.

When you slouch, the spine in your neck and lower back becomes straighter, while the upper back becomes excessively rounded. This produces a forward-head posture, humped upper back and flattened lower back. Ideally, our

postures will change depending on our activities. Unfortunately, we often sink into poor postural habits and lose the natural stacked position our spines were designed to have.

THE MOST COMMON PROBLEMS WITH BAD POSTURE

Very few people have perfect posture. We become so wrapped up in whatever tasks we are doing that we forget to think about how we are holding our bodies. Most people ignore their posture until they begin to notice aches and pains.

Improper posture isn't due to laziness but is generally due to bad habits, or at times, a physical weakness within our bodies. We slouch and slump when we get distracted or due to the design of our comfy couches and chairs. Poor posture leads to excessive strain on your joints, muscles, tendons, and ligaments.

Over time the sustained postures will affect the muscles needed to keep you upright and functioning at your best. Your body is designed to align perfectly to allow for proper movement of your muscles joints. When your spine is not stacked in the natural posture, it can affect breathing, digestion, and blood circulation.

If poor posture continues, it often leads to chronic conditions like back and neck pain. Poor postural habits can also affect your shoulders, especially reaching overhead. In more severe cases, the slouched posture can affect how you walk and negatively affect your balance.

What To Expect In Physical Therapy

CALL 337.223.4622 TODAY!

Our physical therapists are experts in evaluating posture and movement. By pinpointing the source of your aches and pains, we can develop a plan for you that will return you to an ideal posture and quickly relieve your pain.

Here are a few steps you can take to have an immediate impact:

LIMIT HOW LONG YOU SIT

Prolonged sitting is not suitable for your back or your overall health. Although adjusting your posture while sitting can be helpful, a more practical option is to stand up periodically throughout the day. Limit your sitting to 30-45 minutes at a time.

FIND YOUR NATURAL POSTURE

The spine does not like to remain in any one position for extended times. By finding your natural posture, you can counteract the slouching you do throughout the day. Start by lifting your breast bone (i.e., sternum) towards the sky. This will naturally cause your spine to straighten out which will lift you into your natural posture.

START STRENGTH TRAINING

Your body has hundreds of muscles. These muscles protect and control your spine. By lifting weights, running, and swimming, you can keep them strong. Train the muscles of your hips, pelvis, and spine — your core muscles — to help your posture.

Physical therapists are movement experts, and they are great resources to have when trying to achieve your physical performance goals. They will aid you in improving your balance, stability, flexibility, and mobility, all of which will positively affect your posture.

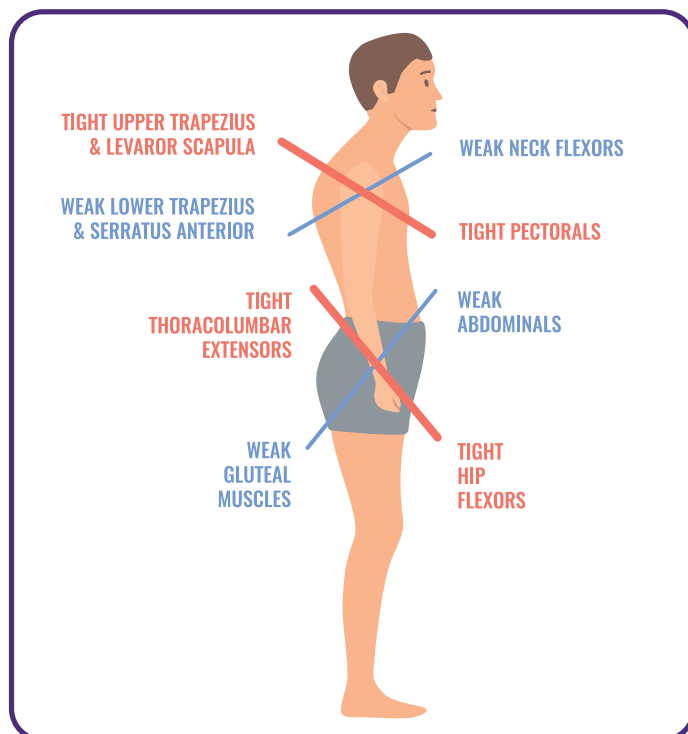
CONTACT US FOR AN APPOINTMENT

As part of your physical therapy treatment, we can teach you to find your natural posture to protect your body from future injuries and make sure you stay healthy! Contact Boulet Physical Therapy today to learn more about how we can help you live pain-free!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4499985/> - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5889545/> - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5684019/> - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31789300/>



WHAT ARE COMMON UPPER CROSS SYNDROME SYMPTOMS?



Unlike some conditions, Upper Cross Syndrome often manifests in a very visible way. Many people will notice their shoulders become more rounded and hunched over time, while the neck and head crane forward. The spine will also start to curve inward near the neck and outward in the upper back and shoulder area.

Furthermore, the imbalanced muscles associated with Upper Cross Syndrome put stress on the surrounding muscles, tendons, bones, and joints, causing most people to develop symptoms that include:

- Headaches
- Neck pain or strain in the back of the neck
- Chest pain and tightness
- Difficulty sitting, reading, watching television, or driving for long periods of time
- Restricted range of motion in the neck or shoulders
- Numbness, tingling, and pain in the upper arms
- Pain in the upper back, especially the shoulders

Physical therapy can address the imbalances in the muscles caused by upper cross syndrome. Specific targeted exercises can include stretching of the neck and chest (pectorals) as well as strengthening of the deep neck flexors, and the muscles of the mid back and shoulder girdles. Boulet PT can help design a personalized training program to diminish some of the effects of upper cross syndrome.

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Staff Spotlight



DYLAN MECHE | PT TECHNICIAN

Dylan Meche joined the Boulet team in March of 2023. He is a graduate of New Iberia Senior High and is currently attending University of Louisiana and is majoring in Kinesiology. Dylan started working in the PT profession because he enjoys helping people overcome physical impairments, and to learn ways to reduce chance of injury. He likes educating patients on how to care for themselves and in proper exercise technique. Dylan loves various sports including travel softball, golf, and competitive pool. Recently he started doing some freelance painting and states, "I'm quite good."



Mike Benoit was the winner of our Father's Day giveaway!

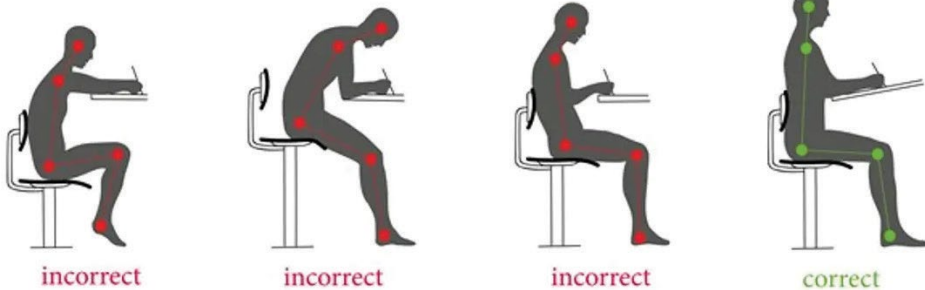
Boulet Physical Therapy & Wellness Institute

RELIEVING YOUR PAIN RESTORING YOUR MOVEMENT

CORRECT SITTING POSTURE AT DESK

Proper sitting posture at the computer is important for your back and health. There are a few simple guidelines that you can follow to have a correct computer posture.

- Keep your feet flat on the floor or a footrest.
- Do not cross your legs, knees or ankles.
- Keep a small space between your knees and the seat of the chair.
- Your knees should be at the same height as your hips or slightly lower.
- Ankles should be in front of your knees.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Don't slump over rest elbows on your desk.
- Knees and forearms should be parallel to the floor.
- Elbows should be at your sides.
- Sit up straight and do not slump to one side.
- Look forward to prevent neck pain or strain.



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ARE YOU KEEPING UP WITH YOUR APPOINTMENTS?

By ensuring you are staying on track with your physical therapy appointments with our clinic you will stay on the road of better health and wellness.

Consistency is incredibly important in order to achieve the results you want. Contact us today with any questions or to schedule your next appointment by calling or going online today!

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