



How To Fix Improper Posture **FOR BACK AND NECK PAIN RELIEF**

“Stand up straight!” has been a refrain from parents throughout the ages, but is it *really* that important? Actually – yes, it is!

Many people assume maintaining proper posture is about appearance: looking tall and confident. In reality, improper posture can cause pain in your neck and upper back and put pressure on your spine, leading to an increased injury risk.

But what exactly *is* proper posture? It probably won't surprise you to learn that it's more complicated than merely standing up straight. Instead, it's more about finding the right spinal alignment for your body—and that's something the physical therapists at Soleil Physical Therapy can help you with!

If you're struggling with persistent neck or back pain, it may be time to visit us for a postural assessment. We'll help pinpoint any impairments or imbalances in your spine that might be causing problems and then provide strategies for maintaining your postural alignment throughout the day.

Understanding Proper Posture: Movement and Awareness is Key

Let's get this out of the way first: There's no universal “ideal posture” that will work for everyone. Even common advice like “stand up straight” isn't particularly helpful: for one, no one's spine is ever perfectly straight since it has a natural curve pattern. For another, you don't spend your entire life standing still.

Rather than aiming for a non-existent “perfect” posture, you want to focus on two things:

- **Postural Awareness:** People don't set out to have bad posture. You might start the day telling yourself you're not going to slouch – but then, as you get busy with other tasks, posture becomes the last thing on your mind. By staying more aware of your posture, you can more easily adapt to the various positions you have to hold throughout the day.

- **Avoid Prolonged Postures:** Your body wants to move. Holding the same posture for extended periods (even if you're sitting up straight and have everything in alignment) is still going to cause problems! Rather than aiming for a "perfect" posture, make sure to change your positions throughout the day. Alternate between sitting and standing. Switch positions. Get up and move around. In short – try to stay as active as possible.

The Relationship Between Posture and Pain

Neck and back pain have several potential causes and contributing factors. Improper posture is often one of them.

When you lose your postural awareness and start to slouch, it puts extra strain on the muscles that support your spine, particularly the muscles in your neck and upper back. This can lead to overuse injuries that cause pain or restricted mobility.

Remaining in prolonged postures (particularly sitting) also puts extra strain on your back muscles. When you get up and move around – even if it's just for a few minutes – you relieve that pressure. Staying active also helps strengthen the muscles of your back and core, which helps prevent common musculoskeletal injuries that can cause pain and dysfunction.

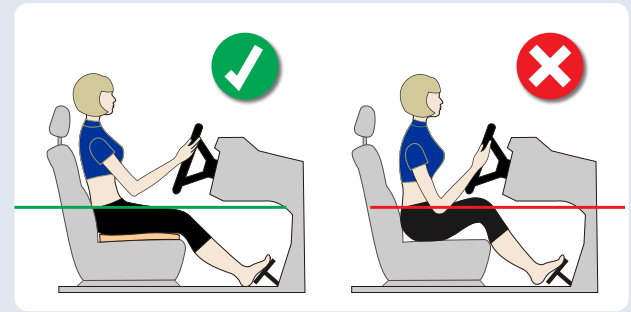
Physical Therapy's Role in Improving Posture

When you visit us for your appointment, here's what we'll do to help you improve your posture and reduce your back and neck pain:

- **We start with a comprehensive postural assessment.** We'll take a look at your posture when you're sitting, standing, and moving, looking for potential areas of dysfunction. We'll also take a complete health history and might run some additional screens, too, testing for strength, mobility, balance, and more.

Proper Driving Posture

If you're experiencing pain after driving, poor posture behind the wheel may be to blame. When traveling, be sure to adjust your driver seat to ensure that your hips are just above your knees. This not only allows for better blood circulation, but can ease the strain on your lower back.



- **We help with any acute pain.** Manual therapy techniques and targeted mobility exercises can help relieve your pain and help you get your body's function back.
- **We help strengthen any weak muscles:** Targeted strengthened exercises will help correct any muscular imbalances stemming from improper posture, providing better support and stability to your spine.
- **We offer personalized postural corrections:** The final piece of the puzzle helps ensure lasting relief. We'll provide a customized postural improvement plan that speaks to your unique needs and impairments.

Start Improving Your Posture Today!

Fixing improper posture isn't a one-and-done affair, but a visit to Soleil Physical Therapy can help you get started. Call us to schedule your appointment today!

Sources: <https://www.physio-pedia.com/Posture>; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4499985/>

3 QUICK & EASY WAYS TO REVERSE POOR POSTURE

In this video we address the facts and myths about poor posture and 3 easy exercises to reverse it throughout the day.

Click to watch Qui's video!



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EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

POSTURE SQUATS FACING WALL

Improves Your Posture

3 Sets | 10 Reps

Start by standing facing a wall with your feet just outside hip-width apart and your toes pointed slightly out. Slowly bend at your hips and knees to lower your butt toward the ground without hitting the wall. Make sure to keep your heels down. Drive through your heels to stand back up straight. Step closer to the wall if possible or farther if needed.



Always consult your physical therapist before starting exercises you are unsure of doing.



PATIENT SUCCESS STORY

“I had a left-side neck pain that traveled down to my arm, which I’d had for a few months now. He gave me a three-minute exercise and it was gone. Incredible. A place that caters to your needs. No rushing you out the door, and the time depends on your pain level. For me, that’s just what the doctor ordered.”

— M.L.I.

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WE WANT TO HEAR **YOUR** SUCCESS STORY!

Click below to tell your PT story and leave your review. We look forward to hearing from you!

★ **REVIEWS**



Call today to schedule an appointment!

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Therapy Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8 AM - 7 PM
Saturday: 8 AM - 4 PM