

MDS Alert

You in Focus: How's Your Alignment? Correct Your Posture and Banish Aches and Pains

Bad posture can land you a repetitive stress injury. Stay healthy and active with these tips.

Good posture places the least amount of stress on your joints and muscles. Check out these helpful hints for correcting your slouch from the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries.

Stay Aligned

Line up your bones so the weight and stress is borne by the strong body parts, much like a suspension bridge carries the weight of many tons of traffic by transmitting the stress down the support columns to the earth. By using your body's architecture efficiently, you can take the strain out of your muscles and joints.

When standing, keep all the parts of your body aligned--ears over shoulders, shoulders over hips, hips over knees, knees over ankles. Relax your shoulders; don't hunch them or rotate them forward. Let your upper arms and elbows hang comfortably at your sides.

Pause to Stretch

Sitting still for long periods of time isn't healthy. Make small adjustments to your posture about every 15 minutes. Larger changes in posture are also important; stand up, stretch or walk around for one or two minutes every hour. The key is to try not to stay in the same position all day. And the bonus is that this stimulates your circulation, too.