

# The Wellness Express™



Jump on the train to good health

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## How Posture Influences Your Physical & Mental Health

Presented by: **Back in Line Chiropractic**

Stop! Before you read the rest of this article, check your posture. Is it in the correct position? Or is it slumped? Do you know the fundamentals of correct posture? Many of us do not give much thought to the subject. This is unfortunate because keeping your spine in the optimal position can deliver a lot more than just a pain-free back. Your chiropractor will tell you posture can affect other areas of your body, including your respiratory, circulatory and digestive systems.<sup>1</sup>

New evidence also reveals the close connection between your posture and how you think about yourself. In this issue of Wellness Express™, we look at the close relationships of good posture, pain relief and psychological health.

### Posture & Pain Relief

Making the effort to be aware of your posture can go a long way to reducing pain and feeling better about yourself. Incorrect posture can actually cause pain to intensify and persist. New research published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* found when individuals adopted dominant, upright postures they were able to endure more pain compared to individuals who assumed submissive postures.

The researchers believe assuming a dominant posture signals to the brain that it has more control of its current condition and environment, and it may cause hormonal changes in the body that boost pain-killing hormones.<sup>2</sup>

Aside from pain, chronic posture problems can lead to joint and disk degeneration and damage to ligaments, muscles and cartilage.

### Good Posture Can Boost Your Confidence

While it helps lessen pain, good posture also impacts internal thoughts. Employment coaches recommend job seekers maintain excellent posture because it communicates selfconfidence to job interviewers, but new research shows posture affects your internal confidence. The Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University recently published a study that showed people who used proper posture and expansive body positions actually increased their sense of power and likelihood of taking action, regardless of their job title or position within an organization.<sup>3</sup>

### Exercise of the Week

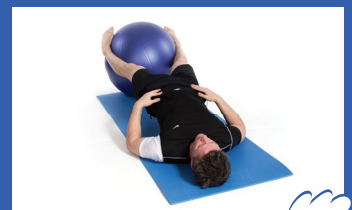
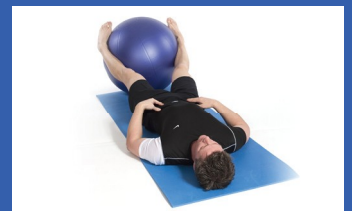
#### Low Back Stabilization in Reverse Bridge Position with Adductor Squeeze

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate

*(Consult your Chiropractor before engaging in this or any other exercise)*

**Start:** Lie on back with lower legs resting on either side of ball, pressing inward with knees straight. Place fingertips on either side of pelvis with elbows resting on floor.

**Exercise:** Lift hips off floor until body is in straight position, feet to shoulders. Stabilize with stomach tucked in and hold for 5-15 counts. Rest 30-60 seconds, then repeat for 3 sets.



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The authors of the Kellogg study were surprised that a person's job position, whether at the top of the corporate ladder or at the bottom, did not seem to have a significant effect on self-confidence. Instead, consistently good posture actually had a bigger impact on how likely you are to believe your own thoughts

Ohio State University also published similar findings. In one of these studies, students were asked to write about several personal traits that would help them qualify for a future job. Those students who held upright postures were more likely to agree strongly with the personal traits they wrote about themselves.<sup>4</sup>

### Mind, Body & Chiropractic

Of course, none of this research would come as much of a surprise to your chiropractor. Since the early days of its development, chiropractic has always known the power of mind-body communication.

Subluxations interfere with the communication between nerves and the brain. If you have a pinched nerve in your vertebra, your tissues that are connected to this nerve will be unable to properly relay information to your brain.

Chiropractic adjustments improve communication between your mind and body. As well as relieving pain, adjustments reduce both physical and mental stress so you have better overall well-being.

### Developing Consistently Good Posture

Posture is the way your body is held in space – whether standing, sitting, or lying down. Certain physical structures in your body line up correctly with your center of gravity. If your body has proper posture, there is a perfect balance to your physical structures, and you are able to hold your body in a healthy position with minimal effort. Ask your chiropractor to assess your posture to see if these anatomical areas are correctly aligned.

You can also help yourself by following these good posture tips.<sup>5,6</sup>

1. Be aware. Practicing awareness of your posture is the first step to correcting it.
2. Take regular breaks from sitting at a computer. Research shows a strong connection between neck pain and intense computer usage.<sup>7</sup>
3. Check the ergonomics of your workstation or desk.
4. Stretch tight muscles, and strengthen weak postural muscles. Your chiropractor can show you the correct techniques to use..
5. Get regular chiropractic adjustments. When it moves properly, your spine has the best chance to position itself properly.

\* \* \*

Keep your thoughts positive and your posture strong, and you can make a healthy impact on both your mind and body.

### Quote to Inspire

*"The natural healing force within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well."*

*- Hippocrates*

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