

What is Good Posture?

The Assumption...

When you hear the words 'good posture', what comes to mind? Stand up straight. Shoulders back, chest up. Tuck your tailbone under. Lengthen your spine. Engage your core... Did you automatically adjust? How much effort is involved? Are you still breathing? Are you forcing yourself to stay there?

We seem to have this idea of how we SHOULD sit, or stand but few feel they can maintain it consistently or be comfortable while doing so. Can we change our idea of what good posture is and lose the expectations that come with the words?

Good Posture...

We are a reflection of our habits and patterns that we've developed over the years. There is no 'bad' habit or posture. There is no 'wrong' way of doing things. The question is, are you aware of how efficient you are and how much effort is required to move you through space?

We have muscles to support us in gravity and for movement through space. An inefficient posture is simply an unorganized body where the muscles meant to move us are actually supporting us. Such inefficient posture is usually a reflection of poor balance, unnecessary effort and lack of self-awareness. Few people are even aware of their poor balance or how much unnecessary tension they carry. The tension is usually habitual and often goes unnoticed. When the body is not organized there is unnecessary effort. The result can often be discomfort and lack of movement which can often lead to injury.

Good posture is when the least amount of muscle mass is involved to hold you upright. When there is an absence of unnecessary contraction within your muscular system your body mass balances lightly on the skeleton giving you the ability to move in any direction with comfort, ease and a feeling of lightness. Movement is effortless!

What You Can Do...

Obviously what you do now works - you've survived so far! But wouldn't it be nice to move with greater ease, comfort and lightness? To decrease the chance of injury and pain and to be able to move freely as you age? Start with increasing your self-awareness. Your body will naturally start to align and balance itself in gravity. How? There's the obvious. Go to a well taught yoga or Feldenkrais® class. But ultimately you are your own teacher. Start by being curious. By noticing. What are your habits and are they efficient? While you do yoga, run, bike, hike, walk, ski, drive, sit at a desk, or do whatever it is you do play with how you can do it slightly differently. Start by focus on one part of your self and notice. A good indicator is your breath. As you explore different movements and postures does your breath change? Essentially, easier breath equals easier posture. It's really quite simple.

Now go back to those first adjustments that you made when you first read the words "good posture" - remember them? As you do them, how does your breath change?

Ultimately good posture shouldn't be hard to achieve, forced or difficult to maintain. Can you let go of needing to achieve good posture and instead enjoy being curious. You'll be surprised what you might discover.

Please note that my articles are simply my opinion. I am sharing with you what I am studying and exploring. I encourage you to be curious yourself. Be your own teacher and enjoy what you discover through your own journey. Happy learning!

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