

MONTHLY FOCUS

SEPTEMBER 2020

THIS MONTH:

- Posture
- Ergonomic Posture
- The Power Pose

Let's talk Posture

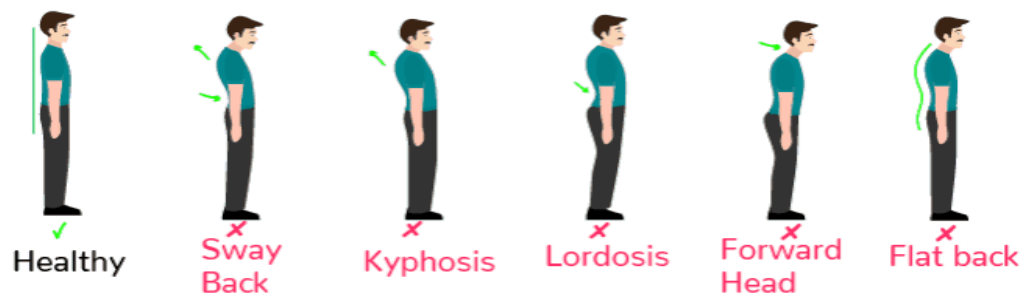
Efficient posture can be defined as *"the balanced three-dimensional alignment that provides for optimal functional capacity, shock absorption and weight attenuation"*. (Hertling & Kessler, 2006)

In other words, an economical position which

allows for, and prepares the body to move in the most advantageous way, minimising potential for injury or dysfunction.

Have a look at the pictures below; can you identify which posture you have? Some is genetic, some is adapted or

habitual, and some may be acquired as a result of injury, illness or pain. In an 'ideal' posture, if you dropped a plumb line down your side, it should intersect your earlobe, mid shoulder, mid hip (at the greater trochanter) and finish just to the back of the outer ankle bone.



Good or Bad?

There's lots of information out there about what constitutes a 'good' posture, and what a 'bad' posture looks like. Often, slouching gets a bad rep, but equally as inefficient is a bolt upright military stance, with pulled back shoulders, flared ribs and elevated chin. As you will know this means the diaphragm won't work optimally due to rib flaring, there will likely be some thoracic and/or lower back

extension, and the neck will be extended; all of which will result in muscle length changes and therefore changes and imbalances in function and loading of other body areas. Diaphragm movement also affects the digestive system so posture has profound ripple effects to other bodily systems.

In essence, a 'good' posture is your next posture, and

what I mean by this is that bodies like movement; we're not meant to sustain the same postural position for any length of time, so if you'd like to have 'good' posture, simply avoid long periods in any one position!

Add to this considerations around symmetry and I'll let you in on a little secret.....it's more 'abnormal' to have a symmetrical body than an asymmetrical one.

Ergonomic Posture

Setting up a workstation is more complex than you think. Considerations around desk height, wrist angle, line of vision, arm placement, leg position and back support all come into play.

An ideal position includes thighs level with the elbows resting into the sides and the hands lightly dropping onto the keyboard in a slightly flexed position.

Shoulders should be relaxed to achieve this, and if the feet don't reach flat to the floor, a foot stool will be needed. The top of the computer screen should be level with the eyes which maintains a neutral neck. If you're working from a makeshift desk, consider how you could adapt things in line with these recommendations.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Power Pose

Have you ever heard of the 'power pose'? There's a theory that adopting a superhero style stance (think wide stance, hands on hips

like Wonder Woman) can positively influence emotional wellbeing and confidence., and is particularly useful prior to certain events such as a job interview, anticipated confrontation or as a presenter at an event.

Professor Amy Cuddy coined the phrase back in 2010, and claimed that hormonal balance was influenced by adopting a 10minute power pose, with increased testosterone, decreased cortisol (our stress hor-

mone) and therefore resulted in increased confidence and risk taking. The jury is out on whether this has stock, as more recent research hasn't been able to support these claims, but nevertheless, if you sit straighter and/or stand taller, you'll probably notice that you feel better in yourself, and are more alert, so although the science basis isn't yet robust, there isn't any harm in trying if you need to boost your confidence a little. I believe that everyone has a little superhero in them that should be allowed to shine every now and then .

