



Ontario
Chiropractic
Association



POSTURE PERFECT

Good posture not only makes you look better, it also delivers increased energy, better breathing, improved circulation, and less wear-and-tear on your joints. It's an investment in both your appearance and your health.

The secret to good posture is maintaining the spine's natural curves. If your spine is not properly aligned, your muscles and ligaments have to work harder to keep you upright and this can result in strain and pain.

When you slouch, you also put pressure on your lungs and stomach. This can affect breathing and digestion, as well as blood flow.

Does your posture pass the test?

Use a three-way mirror or have a friend help you check out these markers:

- When standing: your head, shoulders, hips and ankles should line up, one comfortably above the other. Your knees should be slightly bent and your feet should be shoulder-width apart or more.
- When looking at your back: are your shoulders and hips level or is one side higher than the other? Does your head tilt to one side or the other? Does one shoulder blade seem to be more prominent than the other? Do the muscles of the back seem more developed on one side, compared to the other? A healthy back should be symmetrical.
- When looking from the side, your neck and low back should curve to the front of your body, and your mid-back and pelvis should curve to the back. Postural distortions in the curves of your spine mean stress and strain on your back.



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Tips for Standing Tall

- If you use a bag or briefcase with a single shoulder strap, choose a strap that is long enough to place over your head and rest on the opposite side from the bag. This helps distribute the weight of the bag evenly and prevents distorting your posture.
- High heels throw your spine out of alignment, making good posture difficult and often leading to low back pain. A low-heeled, supportive shoe is best, but if you are devoted to your fashion footwear, try to restrict the height to no more than two inches.
- Try not to sit in any one position for a long period of time. Take a quick stretch break or change positions every 30-45 minutes. For a quick and easy spinal stretch, stand up and raise your arms above your head.
- Strengthening your core back and abdominal muscles will help promote good posture by keeping your spine well supported.



Canada's chiropractors are specialists in back health. If you are concerned about your posture, consider an evaluation.