

Body Mechanics, Posture and Back Pain

PROPER POSITION PREVENTS PAIN

Proper body mechanics is defined as the most efficient, effective, and comfortable use of good, neutral posture during stationary positions and dynamic movement. While you are performing activities such as lifting, bending, twisting, pulling, reaching, pushing, and carrying, correct body mechanics protect your spine from potential injuries.

TIPS FOR GOOD BODY MECHANICS

Your body mechanics can be improved by implementing the following changes into your daily activities:

- Correct body mechanics begin with a good, neutral posture. Good posture is when you feel that your ears, shoulders, pelvis, knees, and ankles are in a straight line. Neutral posture is positioning your body at your comfort level somewhere between extension and flexion.
- An active sitting posture involves sitting on the edge of the chair with your knees at a right angle, feet flat on the floor, abdominal muscles tight to prevent slumping. Change your position frequently during prolonged sitting.
- When working at levels above shoulder height, such as a high shelf use a step stool.
- When working at levels below the waist, such as when you lift an object, squat down to the object by bending your ankles, knees, and hips while maintaining your back in a neutral posture. Then, tighten your abdominal muscles for the lift.
- When you push or pull vacuums, lawn mowers, or drawers, initiate the action by moving the legs. When changing directions, pivot your feet rather than twisting your back.
- Your head and neck will follow your eyes to read a newspaper, book, or a computer screen. From an active sitting posture, bend at the hips while keeping your ears and shoulders in alignment to maintain good neck position during reading.
- Low-heeled shoes minimize low-back strain and discomfort.

- If you are right-handed, place your telephone on the left side of your desk and use your left hand to answer it. This allows your right hand to be free for writing rather than holding the telephone between your right ear and shoulder. Use speaker phones when practical.
- Organization of your workspace minimizes the amount of twisting required to reach necessary objects. Learn to use both hands.
- A chair that swivels and moves with wheels allows you to pivot, change direction, and move without twisting.
- Balance is crucial when lifting an object. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart and slightly staggered, one in front of the other.
- Comfortable positions in bed may include sleeping on your back with pillows under your knees. An alternative position is a side-lying position with pillows between your knees and under your waistline to keep your back from sagging into the bed.

Pain Management is a complex subject best handled by an expert. Call the Doctors at **Newport Pain Management at 949 759-8400** for an expert opinion. For more information, go to www.newportpain.com