



What's your posture telling you?

When most people hear the term posture, they remember being told to stand or sit up straight when they were kids. This article is not an effort to have you stand rigidly, just a look at how we hold our bodies and what it can tell us.

Posture comes from the Latin word ponere, meaning to place. It is defined as "the position of the body; way of holding the body." The important thing to realize about postural problems is that over the years they can lessen your quality of life to some extent - and, if ignored, are likely to worsen as you age.

Whatever postural problem may exist, it affects more of your body than you may realize. Since all your body than you may realize. Since all your soft tissue is interconnected (your muscles, tendons, ligaments, connective tissue, etc.), a problem in one area of your body can (and in time, probably will) affect the area next to it.

For instance, the muscles on one side of your lower back can tighten, causing your body to adjust by twisting slightly. This can begin to affect your upper back/shoulder area and/or your hip area as your body tries to compensate for this new position brought about by your tense lower back.

In his book "*The Owner's Guide to the Body*", Roger Golten describes "average" posture:

"Slouching, paunchiness, round-shoulders, flat feet, backache, neck and shoulder tension are nature. Identifying the factors that contribute to these postural imbalances can help you see which areas need to be changed. Be aware of occupational influences, such as how you sit at work, and how you hold your body during recreational activities or during sleep."

Other influences to consider include tight clothing and certain types of footwear, as well as is having "the whole you" worked on. By relaxing tension from head to toe, the many interconnected areas of your body have the opportunity to return to a more normal condition. Much emphasis today in the natural health field is on treating the whole person, and this is one area where massage shines. Regular massage sessions can help you to maintain the structural gains you receive by helping to keep your body "tuned up" physically. So be sure to make your massages a priority.

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