

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR POSTURE

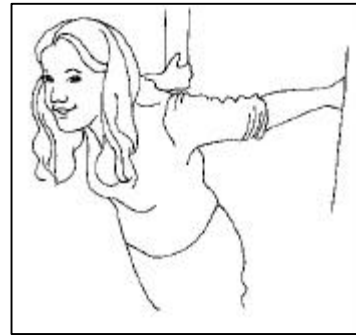
Postural kyphosis, or a round back, can be alleviated with the following methods and exercises:

Proper Stance

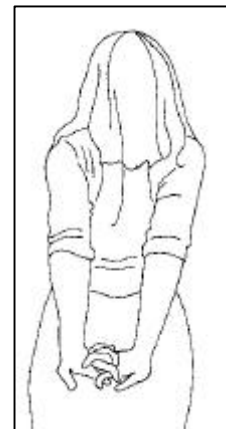
Proper posture is affected primarily by the relationship between the knees and the spine. When you stand or walk habitually with the knees very straight (or even locked out), the spine will be excessively curved, resulting in pain and weakness in the small of the back. If you keep a slight bend to your knees (10–15 degrees), however, back alignment will be normal and stresses reduced. Practice maintaining this posture.

Exercises

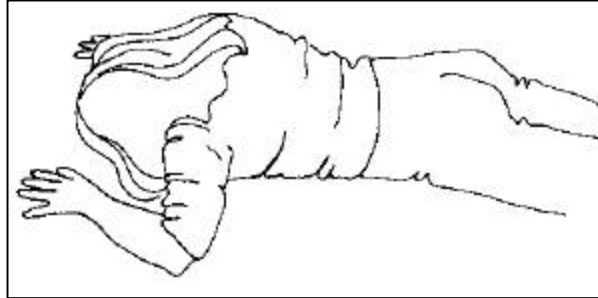
1. **DOORWAY STRETCH.** The muscles on the front of the chest (the pectoralis muscles) contribute to pulling the shoulders too far forward. Hold on to both sides of a doorway with your hands behind you at about shoulder level. Let your arms straighten as you lean forward. Hold your chest up and your chin in. Hold this stretch for 5 counts, ____ repetitions, ____ sets per day, ____ days per week.



2. **UPPER BACK SQUEEZE.** Standing, grasp your hands behind your back. Slowly turn your elbows inward while straightening your arms. Raise your arms as high as possible. Hold this stretch for 5 counts, ____ repetitions, ____ sets per day, ____ days per week.

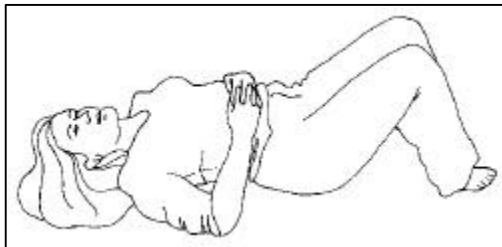


3. **ARM LIFT.** Lie face-down on the floor. Extend your upper arms out from the sides (perpendicular to the body), bending your elbows to form a right angle, and place your palms on the floor. Lift arms up as high as possible while holding the bent arm position. Hold for 5 counts.



Do ____ repetitions, ____ sets per day, ____ days per week. When this exercise becomes too easy, hold a 1–2-pound weight in each hand. Gradually progress to holding 5 lbs. In each hand.

4. **ABDOMINAL CURLS.** Weak abdominal muscles contribute to excessive sway in the lower back, with compensatory sway of the upper back in the opposite direction. Lie on your back, placing your hands over your abdomen. Raise forward at your waist so that your shoulders are about 6 inches above the floor. Hold for 5 counts.



Do ____ repetitions, ____ sets per day, ____ days per week. Every other week, increase by ____ repetitions per set.