



## WHAT IS IT AND HOW DOES IT OCCUR?

It is important to understand that posture has a major role in the health of your musculoskeletal system. So, how does poor posture cause pain? A correct posture means that the key body parts stack vertically on top of each other. This positioning should allow the joints to sit in their 'mid-range' or middle position.

This middle position means that the joints are mildly unstable as no ligaments are tightened in this joint alignment. The small, deep, postural muscles that attach closely to the joint have to work to maintain stability and this correct position. But, what it also means, is that the postural muscles have to be strong and controlled enough for the job. Physiotherapists have extensive knowledge and experience in the training of these postural muscles.

Modern day life means that we sit for far longer than our ancestors. We sit to work, to play and then, when we are tired, we slouch on the sofa. This slouching encourages our low back to take exactly the opposite to ideal shape. Our lifestyles also encourage us to be physically passive. Our work involves smaller and smaller movements performed under tension.

## WHAT DAMAGE HAS OCCURRED?

Sitting is in itself tough on the back but slouching is one of the most damaging strains on our spines in modern life. If we slouch on a regular basis the slouch will feel 'normal' to us but human nature is to interpret that feeling as if it is correct.

## HOW CAN PHYSIOONE ASSIST?

- We can diagnose your specific postural problem
- We can educate you on why it is occurring and show you how to manage it
- We can provide stretches for areas which are too tight
- We can provide strengthening for core areas which are weak and are affecting the alignment of the body
- We can do soft tissue and manual therapy to release the tight muscles

## SITTING CORRECTION

To change posture you have to make a change to your shape. The new corrected shape will feel wrong to begin with, and this can be confusing, especially as changing shape can also create 'change' pains.

Correcting the low back and pelvis position is the first thing. This is the foundation of correct posture. Get this area level and the rest of the posture tends to sit correctly on top. The lower limbs are important to be correctly aligned also. Shoulder girdle and head positioning follow.

If you are sitting poorly try this...

Firstly, gently roll your pelvis forward such that you are sitting on top of your "sitting bones" Secondly, move your thorax slightly upwards and forwards to follow the motion of the pelvis to encourage a slight chest lift. Lastly, gently and minimally lengthen the back of your neck or imagine that you are nodding.

Reference: Falla, D., O'Leary, S., Fagan, A., & Jull, G. (2007). Recruitment of the deep cervical flexor muscles during a postural-correction exercise performed in sitting. [Article]. *Manual Therapy*, 12(2), 139-143.