

# PERFECT YOUR POSTURE

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Your guide to better movement



# Posture basics

Your posture is more than standing up straight with your shoulders back, it influences everything from your mood, internal organ systems, movement patterns, blood flow, and so much more. The spine is the foundation and main support for your body. Prolonged dysfunctional movement patterns and habits can result in long-term issues and chronic pain.

This complex mix of internal and external functionality requires strategic systems to help improve your posture. Retraining your brain to use or not use certain muscles can be addressed with three core principles...

- **Stretch**

Many think of stretching as something only to be done around exercise, but it's a daily habit that all should implement to ensure good posture. This physical practice allows you to create more flexibility, better movement and range of motion, and improved muscle control. On the next page, we'll review easy stretches you can do anywhere.

- **Strengthen**

Posture is not just a function of the back; your core is largely responsible for its function and mobility, too. To maintain stability, your core supports your lumbar spine, pelvis, ribs, and shoulders. Incorporating core-strengthening movements into your routine may be beneficial.\*

- **Habit change**

Poor posture is likely a result of learned habits over many years. This will take time and effort to correct. Everyday habits that lead to bad posture include slouching, looking down at phones and computers, carrying bags, and even excess body weight. Recognizing these patterns and adjusting throughout the day is the first step to retaining your body & improving muscle memory for optimal function.

# Simple stretches

Implementing a new mobility and stretch routine doesn't have to be complicated. You can do many things during your day, even at a desk, that can make a world of difference.

In addition to physical [Fascial Stretch Therapy](#) by a licensed practitioner, you can try these on your own.



## NECK FLEXOR & EXTENSOR

- Start by sitting tall and keeping your shoulders down.
- Tilt your head backward and look at the ceiling with slight resistance. Only go as far as you're comfortable.
- Tilt your head to the right until you feel resistance on the left side of your neck. Hold for 10 seconds and return to the center, still looking at the ceiling. Repeat on the left side.
- You must not jerk your neck and stop movement once you feel slight resistance. Only go as far as your body allows you to. More is not always better.



## LEVATOR SCAPULA STRETCH

- Sit tall on a chair or couch.
- Pull your right shoulder blade down, lean your head forward, and slightly turn it to the opposite side, bringing your chin towards the opposite armpit.
- Place your left hand on the back of your head and gently pull the head down to assist the stretch.
- Repeat on the other side, completing 3 sets, holding each for 10-15 seconds.



## GLUTEUS & HIP STRETCH

- Stand next to a chair or table. If none are available, the ground can work too.
- Place your foot on the chair or table with your knee at a 90-degree angle.
- Slowly lean forward at your hips and gently press your knee until you feel a stretch in your gluteus and hips. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Repeat on the opposite leg and repeat each side for five sets, holding each for 10-15 seconds.

# Posture check

Creating awareness around your habits and movement patterns is critical to long-term change. You can use a self-monitoring checklist to hold yourself accountable with these simple questions:

- Is my back straight?
- Are my shoulders back, relaxed, and neutral?
- Is my screen at eye level?
- Are my arms & elbows at 90-100 degrees when typing?
- Is my weight evenly distributed between both feet?



While there is no quick fix or one-size-fits-all solution, there are small adjustments you can make to your everyday routine. Things like daily walks, supportive shoes, stretching, ergonomic chairs, and weight lifting can all work together to perfect your posture.

# Thank You

Regardless of where you are in your journey to perfect posture, it's important to seek guidance from a certified, qualified professional.

StretchCare takes all lifestyle factors into account when assessing your movement patterns to create a customized plan made for ***you and your goals***. From physical massage and stretch therapy to behavioral habit coaching and strategy, we'll get you on the path to better posture in no time.

## Contact us for a free habit coaching assessment

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