

[IMAGE]

P Stands for Perfect Your Posture

By Editorial Staff

Posture is a buzzword these days, and not for the right reasons: With an increasingly slumped, slouched, ergonomically disadvantaged lifestyle in which we're controlled by our phones and other gadgets, posture and our overall health are suffering – big time.

While lifestyle changes can definitely help (read our article on that topic by clicking here), the following exercises can also be valuable in preventing poor posture and the health consequences that can result. Here are four simple exercises / stretches to get you started on your path to perfect posture:

1. *Thoracic Rotation:* Kneel down, place your right hand behind your head, and point your elbow out to the side. Brace your core and rotate your right shoulder toward your left arm. Follow your elbow with your eyes as you reverse the movement until your right elbow points toward the ceiling. That's one repetition.

Complete 20 total repetitions on each side.

2. *Band Diagonal Raises:* Attach a band or handle to the low pulley of a cable station. Standing with your left side toward the pulley, grab the handle with your right hand in front of your left hip and bend your elbow slightly. Pull the handle up and across your body until your hand is over your head and your thumb is pointing up (a Statue of Liberty pose). Return to the starting position. Complete 15-20 repetitions and then repeat with your left arm.

posture - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark 3. *The Open Book Exercise:* Lie on your side with your knees bent and your arms straight out in front of you, palms together. Keeping your knees on the ground, take your top arm and rotate your upper body all the way in the opposite direction, following your hand with your eyes. Hold for 2-3 seconds; return to starting position. Repeat on the other side. Do five repetitions on each side.

4. *The Wing Stretch:* Place the palm of the hand on the outside upper gluteal (buttock) region so your elbow sticks out to the side. This is the shoulder to be stretched. Grab the elbow with your other hand and pull it forward, simultaneously resisting the pull by stabilizing your shoulder girdle backward on the stretching shoulder. Hold for 10 seconds; repeat with opposite shoulder.

Talk to your doctor about other ways to improve your posture, from adjusting your chair height at work and in your car, to gym exercises you should – and shouldn't – do, and more. P stands for perfect posture; now go out and get it!

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