

Correct your Postures

Correct postures of sitting, standing and walking make a difference in patients of cervical spondylosis. A wrong posture, even temporary, can result in strains on the joints and bring disease. A careful self-examination of one's own posture can reap benefits. One must guide children to sit straight without stooping, especially when they read books or write, so that they do not develop wrong postures and end with neck pains. How to carry the weight of the body is the first lesson, a child should be taught? **There should not be any hump in the back when the child learns to sit, stand and walk.** This lesson of childhood will stand true when adults. When back is humped or head not kept erect, the vertebrae get contracted and neck sunk-putting pressure on both the legs.

2. Putting extra pressure on one leg while walking or standing, will strain the pelvis and lumbar spine besides that the muscles get tense. **Equal distribution of body weight on the legs is a must to avoid backaches and neck pains.**

3. When we sit, stand, walk or drive a vehicle, do not bend spine. Many people develop a habit of sitting on bike with back bent and hands straight over the handle. The eyes are alert on the road, mind is engaged in maneuvering turns etc but the pity is that the back is forgotten! Then comes proness to body aches and back pains.

4. Car drivers not keeping their backs straight also get neck pains. The seat of the car should be adjusted nearer to the steering wheel and if there is space between seat back and upper hips area, a small pillow should be placed in between. Wearing a seat belt reduces this vacant area between back and upper hips

area. So belt keeps back erect. **Erect and only erect is the correct method to sit, stand, walk or drive a vehicle.**

5. Let us have a look at our biological background. Cervical and lumbar curves emerged after human body reached a stage to stand erect. Darwin Theory of evolution says that man walked on four and the erect position was attained after thousands of years. Once standing erect was achieved, it became possible for walking and running on two legs. The curves in the spine make the man erect and when these curves are more than required, it becomes a causative factor for neck and back pain. The most vulnerable to such excessive curves in the spinal joints are internal derangements in fifth and sixth cervical and fourth and fifth lumbar vertebrae. These are the regions of spine where cervical and lumber's fatty accumulation is more significant. (Lardosis). Lardosis makes prone to neck and back pain.

6. **Sleep, bed and pillow:** Both neck and back pain have a definite bearing with the type of bed, one is using. People use different types of beds with different types of mattresses and cots. In the villages, wooden cots with wooden planks are most common. Cots with a woven coir string ("Baan" in Hindi), cotton strip (Niwar in Hindi) or wooden platform in frames of wood or steel pipe are commonly used in villages and small towns. Over these wooden planks, coir string net or cotton strip net, the cotton mattress is used in winter. With the change of time, people now use foam mattresses or cotton mattress with springs beneath which are not healthy for our body. Our body has three main dividers so far as the body weight is concerned. The head and neck are the lighter parts, the hips and legs are heavier parts, and trunk or part from neck to pelvis is the heaviest part. When the body sinks into the foam mattress, the heaviest part of the body sinks deeper in the bed and the next two lighter parts are raised. This



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makes a wrong curvature of the spine and puts strain on the neck muscles. **Our body has a wonderful capability of tolerating wrong postures, if these are temporary.** But prolonged wrong posture of spine on thick 'sink-in' beds weaken the ligaments, bring in minor changes or displacements in the intervertebral joints and finally produce pains. Those who suffer from neck pain should lie on the floor or hard bed for some time after day's hard work and tiredness.

7. **Sleeping posture.** Those who suffer from cervical spondylosis should try to sleep on the left or right side instead of continuous sleeping on the back. While sleeping on the sides of the body, one should lie with the legs slightly flexed or bent at the knees towards the abdomen. This offers great relaxation to the muscles.

8. Standing postures during parties: In most of the parties, the fashion is to stand for a long time at one place.

9. It is better to take some rest after one hour of driving. Stop the car **after** every hour, get down, stretch your hands above, turn your neck side-wise for a while and walk on the road for about five minutes before restarting journey.

10. Lifting of load is another factor leading to neck pain. If you are going for marketing, divided in two bags each with equal amount of weight and one bag in each hand. After walking for a while, place the load on the road, take some rest for about thirty seconds and then again carry the bags. If the weight can be divided in two parts, better shift the bag from one hand to the other after walking for a while. If this is also not possible and you have to lift the bag yourself, better carry it in rucksack or in a bag evenly balanced between the shoulders. At home, if a bucket full of water is to be carried by you, it is better to slide along the floor instead of lifting or make light by draining half contents. If some heavy load is required to be lifted from the floor in your home, do not bend the waist to lift it. You can squat and pick it up while keeping the back and neck straight. Bend your knees instead of bending the back.

11. **Type Of Shoes:** Shoes make a pressure on soles

and sides and if this pressure is abnormal, the impact is on head, neck, the spinal canal and feet itself. The shoes should be comfortable, when walking with, and should not develop much of heat. Walking naked feet is best as is liked in South India and next to it is wearing wooden shoes. (Kharhaon in Hindi, which saints wear). Different kinds of activities like sports, mountaineering and long walks require different kinds of shoes.

In bath-rooms, wear 'chappal' having non-skidding sole. Footwear is very important factor in the preventive measures. Shoes with high heels should not be used; these are not good for spine. The spine is thrown out of line by use of high-heeled shoes and causes pain in the neck.

12. **Traveling** on rough and bumpy road by bike and jeeps should be avoided. If the journey is by bus, better wear a collar on neck to avoid jarring and jolting. The collar can be selected in consultation with the attending physician. Movie in a cinema hall: requires to sit in an awkward position for three hours and this may aggravate neck pains. If you are have aggressive cough and sneezing, take bed rest and medicines for cold and cough first. Excessive coughing aggravates neck pains. Excessive exercise and fatigue should also be avoided.

13. **Working on computers** need more care for neck pain. The table should match your height. Roughly your elbows and table top should be at same level. Your eye level should be in alignment with screen of computer continuously for hours. Take a break and during this break, place your palms on eyes like an inverted cup for some time. Stretch your hands above your head and spread the fingers. Do this two to three times. Keep your back straight on your chair and now look towards right shoulder moving your neck slowly. Hold. Repeat on other side. Repeat twice. Then make your neck straight and nod slowly three times. Move your hips forwards to the edge of the chair. Sit straight and keep your hands on the rest of chair. Now turn your body to right side as if looking behind. Hold. Repeat on left side. Repeat three times.

