

# TO YOUR HEALTH

Carleton-Willard Village Out-Patient Clinic - 100 Old Billerica Rd., Bedford, MA 01730

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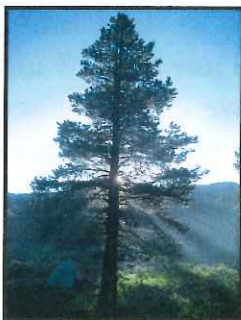
## Proper Posture

By Dr. Carl Virusso

In this edition of To Your Health, I would like to review proper posture for several daily activities such as sitting, standing, sleeping and also gardening.

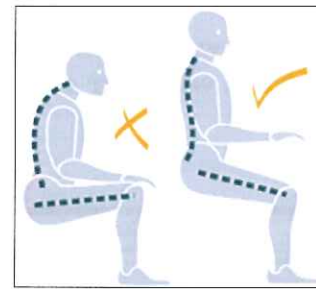
Having good posture can have several beneficial benefits that include:

- Improved breathing – good posture allows for you to take a full breath by allowing your ribcage to expand and your diaphragm to move freely.
- Increased oxygen intake - allows for improved concentration and mind acuity
- Improved digestion – it allows the natural movement of food from the stomach to the intestines without any undo pressure or resistance.
- Decreased muscle/joint strain – our bones, joints and muscles are in correct alignment thereby decreasing any abnormal wear and tear.
- Improved Self Image – A recent study in Health Psychology revealed that sitting up straight can decrease negative emotions and also lift your mood.
- Decreased health issues – having good posture while sitting or walking can decrease the risk of neck pain, back pain and disc injuries.



## Proper Posture for Sitting

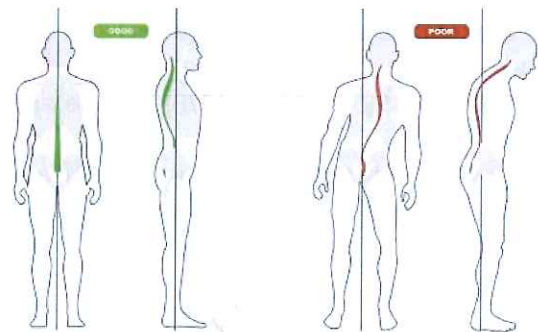
- Feet flat on the floor or on a bench.
- Knees level with or slightly below your hips.
- Keep a small space between the back of your knees and the chair
- The low back should be supported by the back of the chair or a small pillow if necessary. Shoulders should be relaxed and your elbows at an angle of 90 degrees or more.
- If working at a computer, the monitor should be just slightly below eye level.



## Proper Posture for Standing

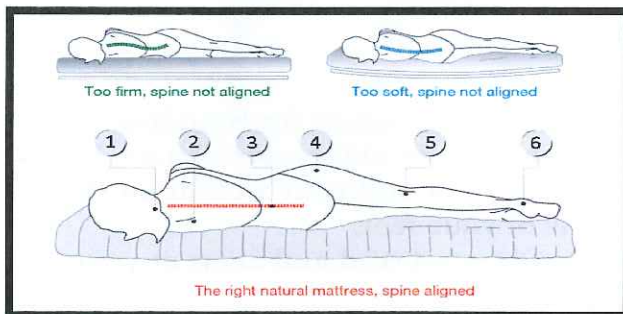
- Feet about shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent and your weight on the balls of your feet.
- Shoulders relaxed and arms at your sides.
- Stomach tucked in and chest forward
- Head level.

Here is a plumb line assessment for posture from the side and back



### Proper Posture for Sleeping

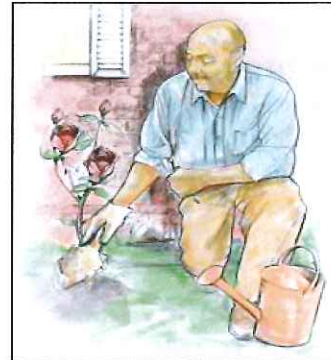
- First and most important, is to choose the mattress that is right for you. Mattresses come in a variety of styles including traditional coil, latex foam, combination coil and memory foam, air and water. When purchasing a mattress, take your time and do some research. A rule of thumb to narrow this search is to decide on the size wanted and budget. The right mattress will keep your spine in alignment while either sleeping on your back or side.
- Sleeping on your side or back is best.
- When sleeping on your side, place a pillow between your legs to keep your hips in alignment.
- When sleeping on your back, place the pillow under your knees to reduce stress on the low back.
- Always use a pillow. The pillow supports a neutral position whether sleeping on your back or side.



### Proper Gardening Posture

- Gardening is exercise! So make sure to warm up and stretch before starting.
- Always bend and lift by using your knees and hips. Keep your back straight when lifting.
- Avoid bending and twisting at the same time.
- Get as close to your task as possible so as to avoid reaching which can strain the back.

- When kneeling, kneel on one leg only and alternate sides. Kneeling on both knees will cause a rounding and strain of the low back.
- Use long handled, ergonomic tools to make your job easier.
- Take frequent breaks, drink plenty of water and alternate between different tasks.



If you would like more information about the topics discussed in this newsletter or would like to make an appointment with Dr. Virusso, please contact Michelle at the Clinic.

## BEDFORD DRUG PICK-UP

The Bedford Police will pick-up expired and unused medications on:

**Friday, August 14, 2015**

You can drop off any prescription or over-the-counter unused/expired medication at the Clinic between 8:30 am and 12 noon.

Unfortunately, we can only accept medicines during these times and on the date of pick-up.