

## Is your posture affecting your health?



Many of us don't think about posture until we start feeling aches and pains. Whether sitting at a desk, standing for long hours, or sleeping in the wrong position, small habits can have a big impact over time. Poor posture can cause **back and joint pain, tension headaches, breathing difficulties, and even digestive issues.**

Making small changes to **how you sit, stand, and sleep can make a real difference.** Here's how to spot posture problems, understand their impact, and fix them.

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## How posture affects your health

Posture affects more than just your back. Here's how:

**Spinal health** – Poor posture puts stress on your spine, increasing the risk of misalignment, disc problems, and long-term pain. Studies show that conditions like a hunched back become more common with age, especially among those over 50.

**Joint strain** – Slouching or leaning forward too much can wear down joints, leading to stiffness and discomfort. Poor posture can accelerate joint wear by up to 20%.

**Muscle imbalance** – When some muscles work harder to compensate for weak ones, you can develop pain and tension. Office workers who sit for hours each day are particularly prone to this.

**Breathing issues** – A hunched posture compresses your lungs, making deep breaths harder and reducing oxygen intake.

**Digestive problems** – Slumping while sitting squeezes your organs, which can slow digestion and cause bloating. Research shows that poor posture can reduce digestive efficiency by up to 40%.

**Headaches and tiredness** – Bad posture strains your neck and shoulders, which can lead to headaches and fatigue. Around 60% of chronic headache sufferers report posture-related triggers.

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## Signs your posture needs work

Your body gives warning signs when your posture is off. Watch out for:

- **Back, neck, or shoulder pain** – Slouching can cause aches and stiffness.
- **Hunched shoulders** – A sign that upper back muscles are weak or strained.
- **Headaches** – Poor neck and head alignment can trigger them.
- **Tiredness** – Bad posture makes muscles work harder, using more energy.
- **Stiffness** – Posture problems can reduce flexibility over time.

## Common posture mistakes

Bad habits can creep in without realising. Here are some mistakes to avoid:

**Slouching when sitting** – Sitting with a curved back or leaning too far forward puts strain on the spine and weakens core muscles. Over time, this can lead to back pain and stiffness. Experts recommend keeping your back straight and feet flat on the floor for better support.

**Hunching over screens** – Looking down at a phone or leaning into a computer screen causes 'tech neck,' where your head tilts forward, straining the neck and upper spine. Overuse of screens is a common cause of this, with many people spending over seven hours a day in front of them.

**Leaning forward when standing** – Many people lean forward when standing, especially when tired or carrying a heavy bag. This puts stress on the lower back instead of evenly distributing weight.

**Crossing your legs too often** – Sitting with one leg over the other for long periods can tilt your hips, causing discomfort in the lower back and knees. Try switching leg positions regularly or sitting with both feet flat on the floor.

**Sleeping in awkward positions** – Sleeping on your stomach with your head turned to one side can strain your neck and lower back. Using a supportive pillow and mattress can help prevent these issues.

## How to check your posture

Not sure if your posture needs fixing? Try these simple checks:

1. **Wall test** – Stand with your back against a wall. Your head, shoulders, and lower back should touch the wall naturally. If they don't, your posture may need work.
2. **Mirror test** – Look at yourself from the front and side. Your shoulders should be level, and your head should be in line with your spine.
3. **Sitting test** – Sit upright with feet flat on the floor. Your lower back should feel supported, and you shouldn't slouch.

## Simple fixes for better posture

Good habits can help correct posture problems and prevent pain. Here's what the experts recommend:

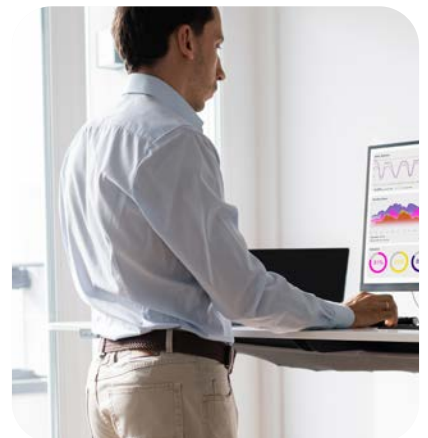


### Sitting

- Keep feet flat on the floor, knees bent at 90 degrees, and ankles separated. This improves lower body stability and alignment.
- Sit with a straight back and shoulders relaxed to reduce strain on your spine.
- Use a chair that supports your lower back to prevent slumping.
- Adjust your screen so it's at eye level to avoid hunching and straining your neck.
- Take breaks every 30 minutes to stand, stretch, and reset your posture.

### Standing

- Distribute weight evenly across both feet to reduce strain on your lower back and joints.
- Keep shoulders back and relaxed, avoiding slouching.
- Align your head with your spine instead of jutting it forward.
- Engage your core muscles to provide extra spinal support and reduce tension on your lower back.
- If standing for long periods, shift your weight between legs occasionally to avoid fatigue.







### Sleeping

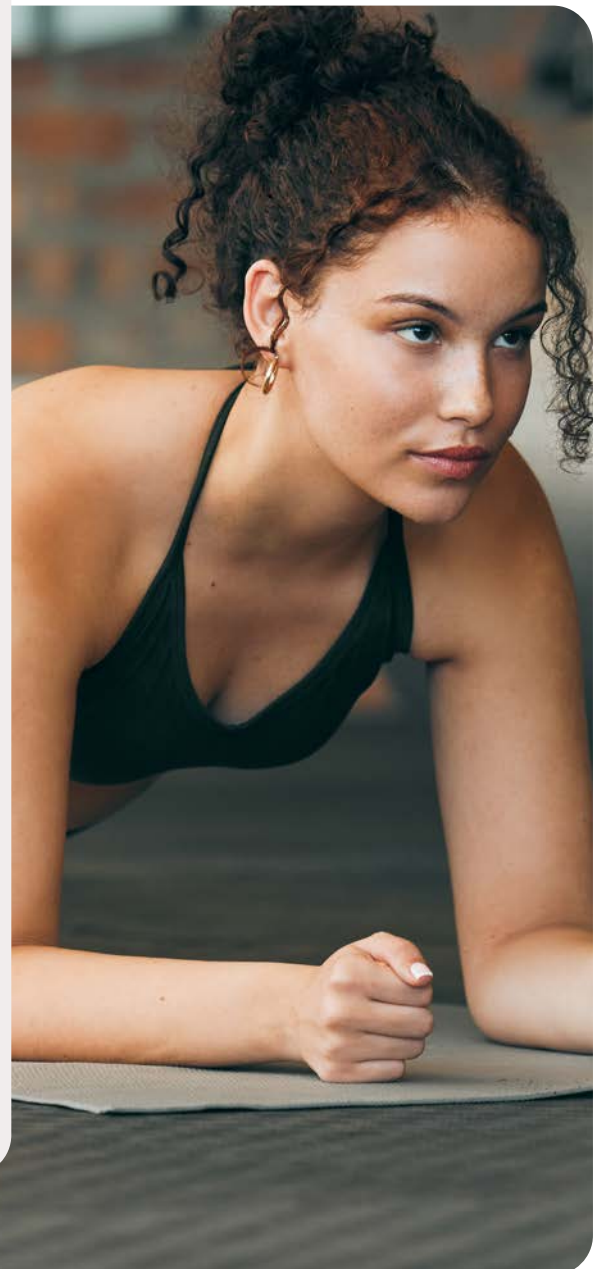
- Sleep on your back or side with a supportive pillow that keeps your neck aligned with your spine.
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach, which can strain your neck and lower back.
- Use a firm mattress that keeps your spine in a neutral position to reduce morning stiffness.
- If you sleep on your side, place a pillow between your knees to keep your hips aligned and prevent lower back pain.

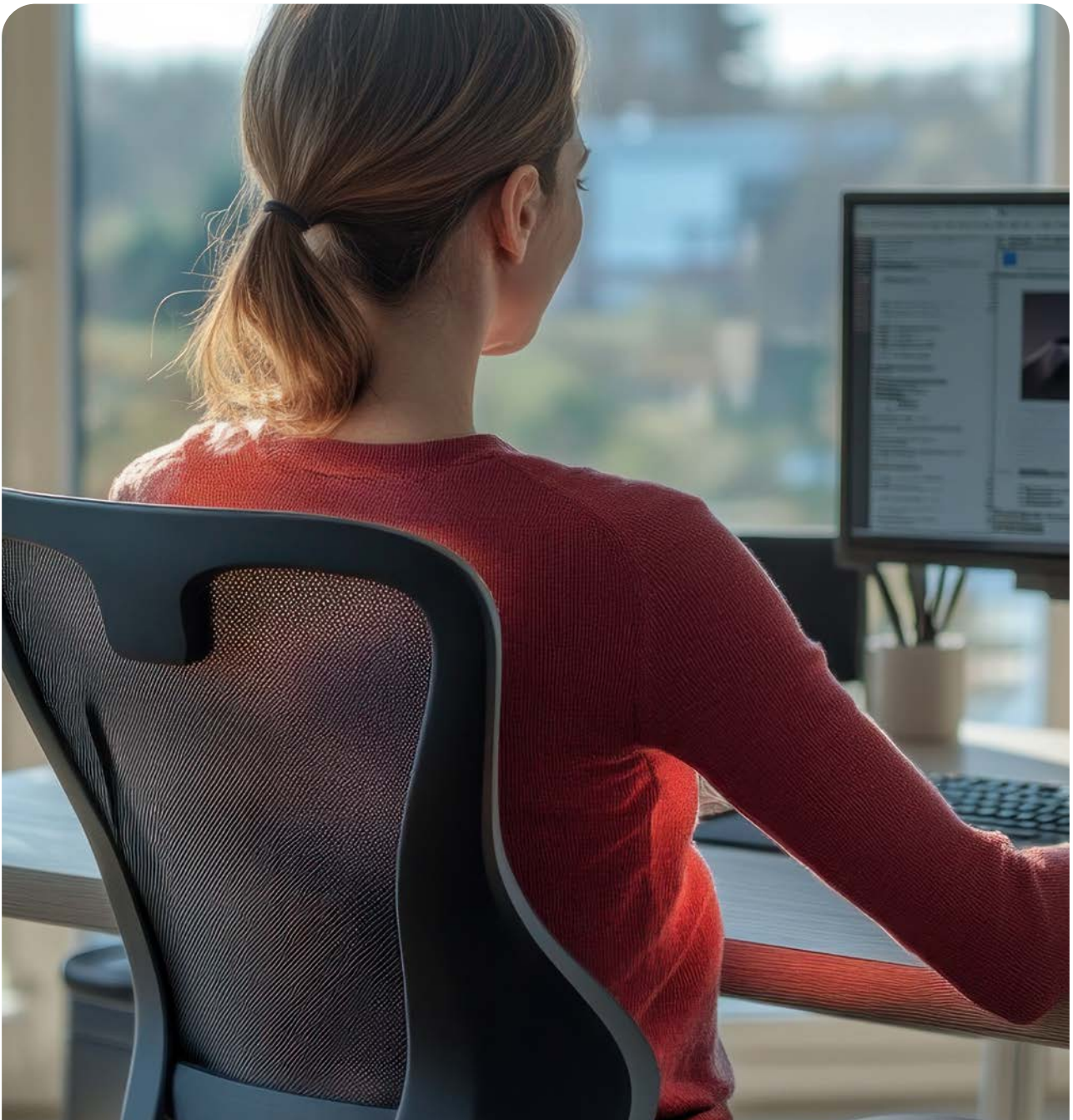
### Strengthening exercises

Not everyone has time for the gym, and not everyone has access to one. You don't need any equipment or special training to strengthen the muscles that support good posture. These simple exercises can be done from anywhere whether at home, in the office, or even during short breaks throughout the day.

By building strength in your core, back, and shoulders, you'll improve stability, reduce strain on your joints, and ease the discomfort caused by poor posture.

- **Planks** – Strengthen your core muscles, which support your spine and help prevent slouching.
- **Shoulder blade squeezes** – Strengthen upper back muscles to counteract hunching.
- **Chin tucks** – Improve neck alignment and relieve tension from looking down at screens.
- **Lower back stretches** – Increase flexibility and reduce stiffness in your spine and hips.
- **Hip bridges** – Strengthen glutes and lower back muscles to improve stability while sitting and standing.





## Make good posture a habit

Improving your posture doesn't have to be hard. **Small adjustments** to how you sit, stand, and move throughout the day can make a noticeable difference. Better posture can help ease tension, improve mobility, and even boost your energy levels. **The more you build these habits into your routine, the more natural they will feel.**

Contact **HealthHero** today for personalised advice to help you feel more comfortable and supported in your daily movements. We're with you every step of the way.

All information correct as of April, 2025