



# Brostrom Physical Therapy

## Quote of the Month:

"Start where you are.  
Use what you have.  
Do what you can."

-Arthur Ashe



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## References:

<sup>1</sup> Cleveland, L., & Kemper, M. (2017, January). Posture and body mechanics. In *Mayfield Brain & Spine*. Retrieved from <http://www.mayfieldclinic.com/PE-POSTURE.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. (2018). Good posture tips. In *Mayo Clinic*. Retrieved from Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/multimedia/back-pain/sls-20076817?s=3>

<sup>3</sup> The Cleveland Clinic Foundation. (2018). Back Health & Posture. In *Cleveland Clinic*. Retrieved 2018, from <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/4485-back-health-posture>



*"Hands-on treatment you need  
with the care you deserve."*

Monthly Newsletter  
July 2018

## Improving Posture for a Healthy Back

From the desk of: **Kathleen Dobbie, PT, DPT, CKTP**

"Posture is the position in which you hold your body upright against gravity while standing, sitting, and lying down."<sup>1</sup> Good posture is hard to find, but even harder to maintain. To prevent a back injury and maintain good spinal health, proper posture is critical. Proper posture requires training your body to stand, walk, sit and lie in positions that place the least amount of stress on muscles and ligaments.

The benefits of proper posture are not just seen in the spine, but throughout the entire body. It keeps bones and joints in proper alignment and decreases abnormal wear and tear on joint surfaces. It even prevents muscle fatigue because they are being used more efficiently and prevents overuse problems. To achieve proper posture, the following are required:

- Good muscle flexibility;
- Normal motion in the joints;
- Strong postural muscles;
- A balance of muscles on both sides of the spine;
- Postural awareness.

*The following are recommendations for proper positioning to maintain the correct spinal curvature.*

### Good standing posture<sup>2</sup>:

- Stand up tall with shoulders back;
- Keep your head level in line with your body;
- Pull in your abdomen;
- Don't lock your knees;
- Bear weight on the balls of your feet.

If you must stand for extended periods of time make sure to shift your weight from one foot to the other and/or from the ball of the foot to the heel.

**Good Sitting Posture<sup>3</sup>:** Ensuring your chair is adjusted properly will make it easier to maintain

proper posture. To do so:

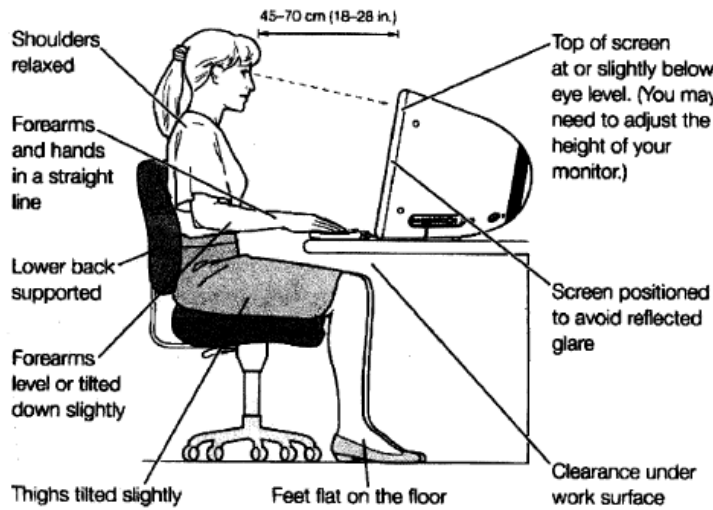
- Keep feet flat on the floor or on a footrest so that your thighs are parallel to the floor;
- Don't cross your legs and keep your ankles in front of your knees;
- If the chair doesn't support your lower back, place a small rolled up towel behind your lower back;
- Keep your upper back and neck comfortably straight;
- Keep shoulders relaxed and elbows on armrests if available.

**Lying down posture<sup>3</sup>:** No matter what position you lie in, make sure the pillow is under your head and not your shoulders. The pillow should also be an appropriate thickness to allow your head to be in a neutral position. If lying on your side keep a pillow between your knees and avoid pulling your knees up towards your chest. Also, avoid sleeping on your stomach as this causes unnecessary strain on your back and neck. If lying on your back, a pillow should be placed under your knees for support. A firm mattress is the preferred surface to sleep on so that there is no sag present.

Proper posture is important to maintain good spinal health. If you have back pain you may need to adjust your posture and/or modify your work space. In addition, regular exercise can prevent back injury. It can promote proper flexibility and strengthening. If you have further questions on posture and/or are experiencing back pain please contact your physician regarding your concerns. If physical therapy is recommended, myself and the team of therapists here at Brostrom Physical Therapy would be happy to treat you! We have knowledge and experience to develop a treatment plan consisting of pain-relieving modalities, manual therapy, and gentle exercises designed to stretch and strengthen the core and back muscles.



# Proper Posture for the Computer



- Having the keyboard at elbow height will prevent you from bending your wrist all the way up or all the way down.
- Incorrect posture can cause your shoulders to roll forward, causing your neck and shoulder muscles to shorten. This will compress nerves in the neck, affecting your wrists, fingers, and hands.
- Typing materials should be eye level, so that the neck is not craned.
- Keeping the neck flexible and the head upright maintains circulation and nerve function to the arms and hands.

## Recipe of the Month: *All American Trifle*

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Ready In: 40 minutes

### Ingredients:

- 3 pounds fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 quart heavy cream
- 1 (3.3) ounce package instant white chocolate pudding mix
- 1 (6 ounce) container lemon yogurt
- 2 Tablespoons coconut-flavored rum, or to taste (optional)
- 2 (16) ounce prepared pound cakes, cubed
- 2 pints fresh blueberries, or as needed



### Directions:

- In a bowl, sprinkle the strawberries with sugar; stir to distribute the sugar, and set aside. Chill a large metal mixing bowl and beaters from an electric mixer.
- Pour the cream into the chilled mixing bowl, and add white chocolate pudding mix, lemon yogurt, and about 1 tablespoon of coconut rum, if desired; beat until fluffy with an electric mixer set on Medium speed.
- Spread a layer of pound cake cubes into the bottom of a glass 10x15-inch baking dish, and sprinkle the cubes with another tablespoon of coconut rum. Cover the pound cake with a layer of strawberries; sprinkle blueberries over the strawberries. Spread a thick layer of whipped cream over the berries. Repeat the layers several times, ending with a layer of strawberries sprinkled with blueberries and reserving about 1 cup of whipped cream; top the trifle with dollops of whipped cream to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.