

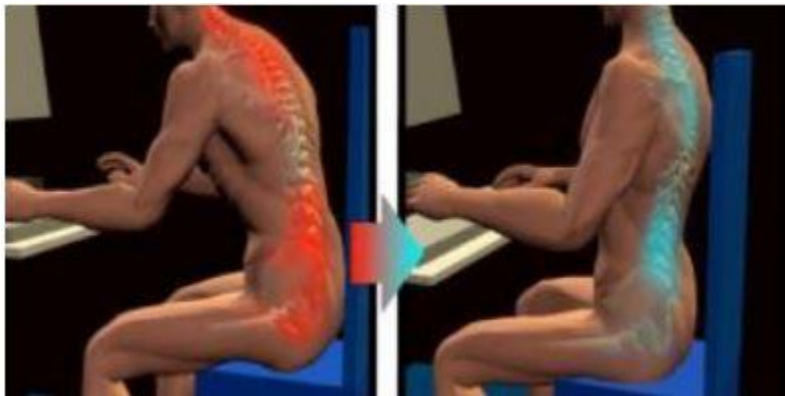
## The Importance of Spinal Posture and Scapular Stability for the Shoulder

There are a multitude of shoulder, spine, scapular conditions that benefit from 'good posture'. But what does that even mean? And how do you achieve it?

When visions of posture first pop up, I envision an old-fashioned teacher hitting you with a ruler and yelling at you to "STAND UP STRAIGHT!" They were actually trying to help!

So why is good posture so important?

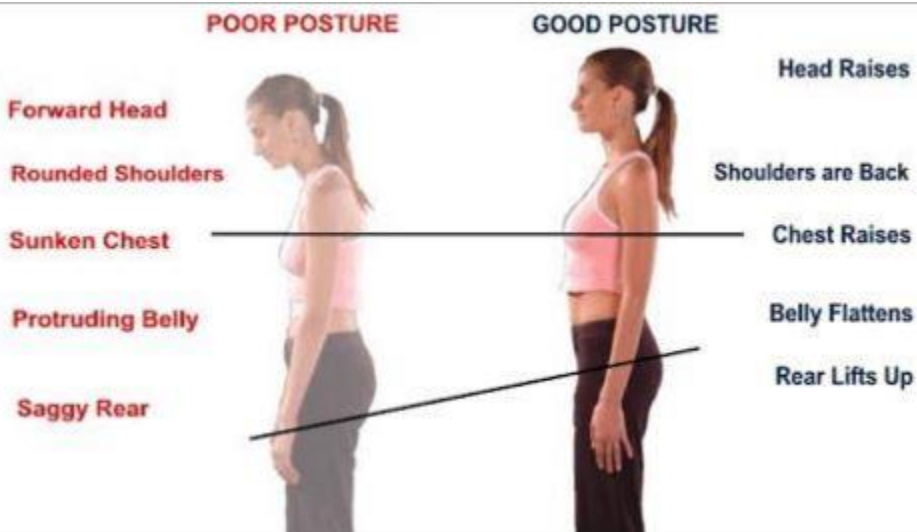
First, it allows the muscles/tendons and joints of the spine to be at their ideal position so there is not abnormal tension on one area or another. Second, it puts the shoulder joints in their ideal position so when the shoulder is used it is at less risk for injury. However, when the ideal posture has been too far gone for too long this can be difficult and further stretching and strengthening need to be added to even maintain an ideal posture.



Posture can be static (stationary), like when you are sitting at a desk, or dynamic, when you are moving. Both are important and both need to be taken into account when starting an exercise routine as we are static and dynamic throughout the day. Sleeping posture can be just as important as throwing positions for stress on the shoulder (as many who have shoulder pain can attest to). Therefore, as strengthening exercises are introduced and progressed, posture should be progressed. For instance, someone with poor shoulder blade strength may have poor posture that causes some shoulder pain when the arm is lifted up. Thus, when your posture is corrected with good shoulder

blade (scapular) positioning your shoulder pain can be relieved. At first you may not be able to maintain the correct position for very long but with continued work your commitment will pay off. As your strength progresses, so should your awareness and time spent in the corrected posture.

This diagram shows poor vs. corrected spinal and scapular posture.



For some scapular and shoulder exercises click on the link on our website [www.missoulaboneandjoint.com](http://www.missoulaboneandjoint.com). Before starting an exercise routine make sure you are performing the exercises properly and using the recommended guidelines to avoid injury. Our Physical Therapy Team as well as our Physician Extenders (Licensed Athletic Trainers) are well versed in exercising properly and can prescribe the correct exercises and exercise technique for your condition. For more information contact Missoula Bone & Joint Physical Therapy at (406) 542-4702.

Best wishes,  
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