



POSTURE AND PROPER BODY MECHANICS

TASK: Teach your element about good posture and proper body mechanics with lifting and daily activities.

CONDITIONS: Discussion – Question based

STANDARDS: Understand what good posture looks like and how to safely lift and perform daily activities/chores.

REFERENCE(S): FM 7-22, Army Physical Readiness Training (Appendix C) and American Physical Therapy Association (apta.org)



POSTURE AND PROPER BODY MECHANICS

Importance of Posture

Problems with the spine (neck, mid back or low back) can be caused and/or aggravated by poor posture. It is very important for us to maintain the correct posture to avoid injury and protect the small joints in our cervical spine from degenerative changes.

Once an injury has occurred or a problem arises, it is even more important to learn what the proper posture for the neck and back is.

What does 'proper body mechanics' mean?

It's important to learn to maintain a good posture when bending or moving in order to minimize the forces through your spine. Forces placed through the spine can increase 10-fold when carrying/lifting objects away from the center of your body.

Utilizing proper body mechanics with normal daily work, home and recreational activities can greatly reduce back injury or assist with faster recovery.

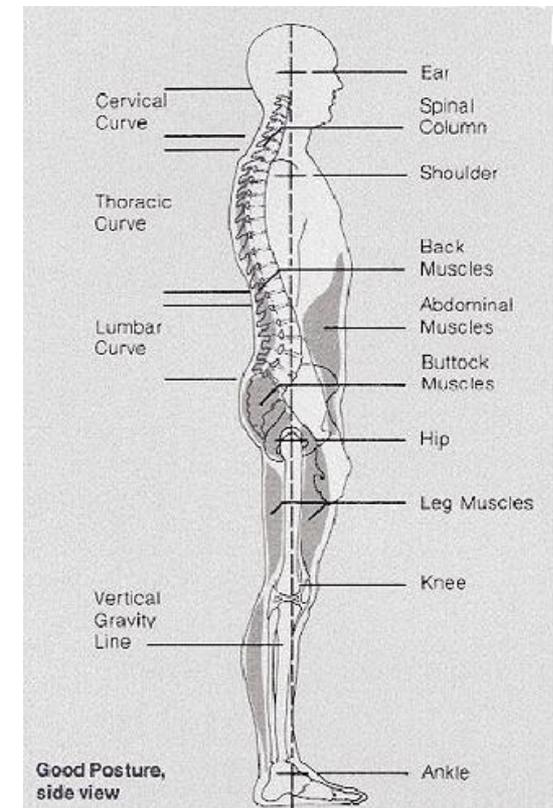
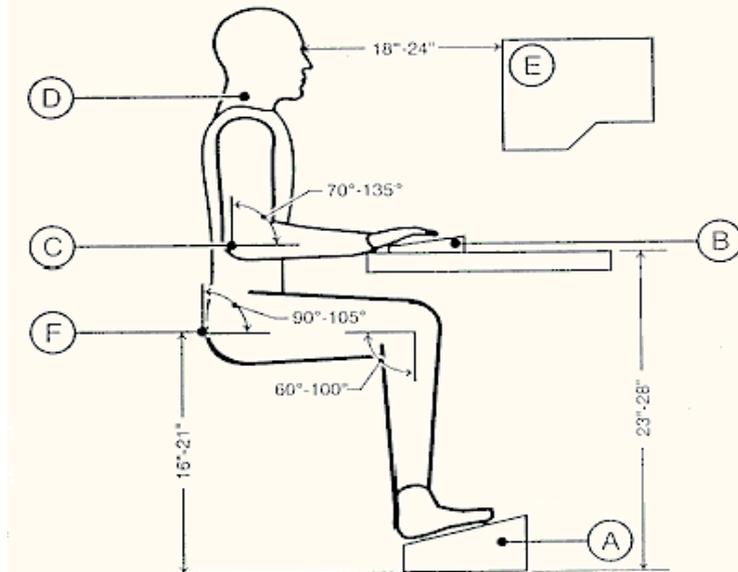


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What does GOOD posture look like?

Here are examples of good sitting and standing postures.

- Ears over hips over ankles = alignment
- Eyes forward/chin level
- Upper back straight but chest not “pushed out”
- Normal curve in low back/pelvis/hips neutral
- Elbows and hips at 90degrees when sitting



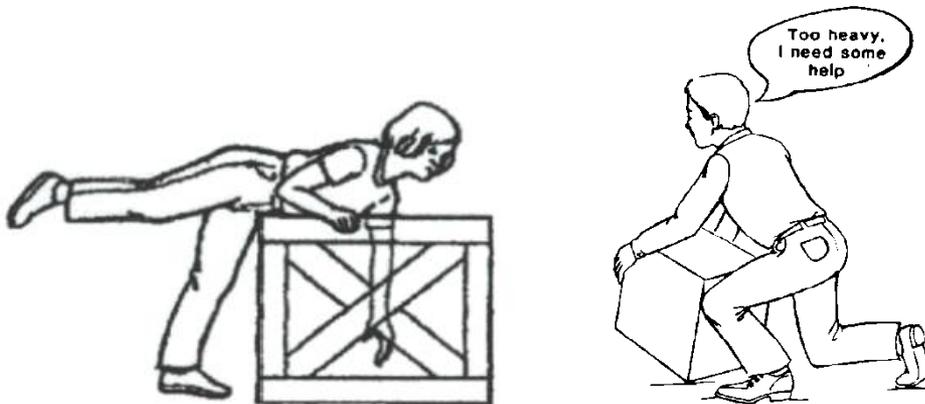
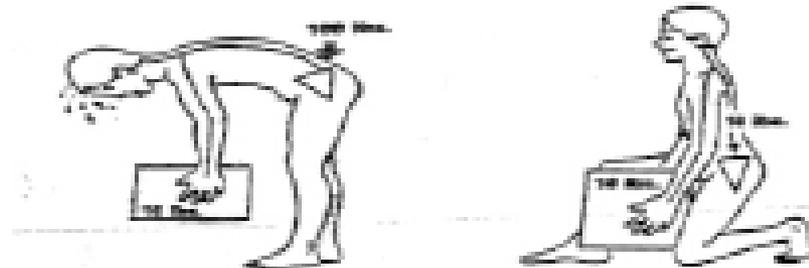
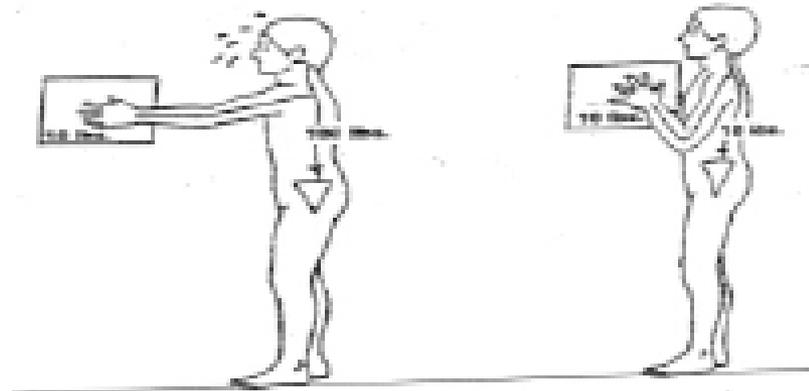


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FORCES ON THE SPINE

When objects are kept close to the body, the force on the low back is reduced. Forces on the low back can be 10x greater when objects are lifted or carried away from the body.

1. Protect your back!
2. Keep objects close to you when lifting/ carrying or ask for help!
3. If you have to reach away from your body, lift your leg behind you as a counter weight and support your upper body with one hand.





POSTURE AND PROPER BODY MECHANICS

BENDING FORWARD



INCORRECT

Note the rounded back



CORRECT

Note the straight spine

It's important to learn to bend and move so as to minimize the forces through your spine. Bend from the HIPS, not from the spine. When bending forward remember to support your body with a hand if possible, and to place one foot behind you to decrease the forces on your back. Remember to maintain the neutral spine posture.



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BENDING FORWARD



RIGHT!



WRONG!

When sweeping and raking remember to following these tips:

DO keep the tool in close to your body

DO work close to your feet

DO keep spine straight and stabilizing
the muscles active

DO use small, frequent strokes
with the broom or rake

DON'T twist your spine

DON'T bend over

Especially **DON'T** twist and bend over at
at the same time

DON'T reach far away from yourself