

GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

Helping Yourself

Chiropractic involves a partnership approach to better health. It is up to you to be an active participant in your recovery. If you choose a passive role, expecting us to “fix” you, your recovery will likely be slow going. We are excited about showing you what you can do not only to *get* well, but also to help you *stay* well. When you actively participate in your recovery, you will save money and get well faster. What you do when you are not in our office has a profound effect on the results you achieve. Please feel free to visit our website, www.drholding.com, for additional valuable information.

Abdominal Hollowing

Abdominal hollowing should be performed throughout your activities of daily living. Fully exhale. As you continue to exhale, suck in your lower abdominal muscles (belly button) toward the spine to the point of tightness. Practice holding your abdominal muscles tight while you breathe.

Posture

When Sitting:

- 1) Make sure both feet are flat on the floor, knees should be slightly higher than the hips. Use a pillow, towel, or lumbar support behind the low back if necessary.
- 2) Keep your buttocks to the back of the chair and maintain a slightly inward curve in your low back. The back support of your chair is only beneficial if you sit against it.
- 3) Use the arm rests on your office chair to take stress off the shoulders.
- 4) Cross your legs at the ankles, not at the knees. Crossing your legs at the knees can aggravate an existing back condition as well as interfere with circulation to the lower extremities.
- 5) For desk work, bring documents up to eye level to avoid hunching over and looking down for long periods of time, and be sure your work station is ergonomically assessed.
- 6) Avoid holding the phone between the shoulder and ear. Use a headset or speakerphone if a large part of your day is spent on the phone.

When Standing:

- 1) Stand tall, stretch the top of your head toward the ceiling, feet pointing straight ahead, and knees should be slightly narrower than shoulder width apart and very slightly bent.
- 2) Perform a slight pelvic tilt and abdominal hollowing. This will help prevent excessive swayback (lordosis) in the lower part of your back.
- 3) Elevate your chest slightly and bring shoulders back and down.

- 4) Keep one foot elevated on a box or step, alternating if you stand for prolonged periods.
- 5) Wear supportive footwear and consider support stockings.
- 6) Avoid excessive stretching, reaching or prolonged overhead work.
- 7) Shoes that wear unevenly or excessively can be the source of many problems in the body above. Ask us about examining your shoes and your feet.

When Lying:

- 1) Sleep on a firm mattress, preferably one that is neither too hard nor too soft. It should be just firm enough to hold your body level while at the same time soft enough to that your shoulders, buttocks, etc. will depress into the mattress. See the article on our website www.drholding.com.
- 2) Your pillow should support your head so that your neck vertebrae are level with the rest of your spine. Avoid sleeping on two pillows. Ask us about our recommended cervical (neck) pillows.
- 3) Sleep on your back or on your side with your legs flexed (bent) slightly. Avoid sleeping on your stomach.
- 4) Use of a pillow between the knees when side lying helps minimize pelvic rotation. A pillow beneath the knees when lying on your back may take the strain off your lower back. Ask us about our pillows and wedges.
- 5) Rise from your bed by turning onto your side, allowing your legs to drop off the bed, then pushing yourself up with your arms into a seated position. This will minimize the amount of strain on your back.
- 6) Do not read or watch TV in bed, particularly with your head propped at a sharp or strained angle.

When Lifting:

- 1) Keep your head level and chin up.
- 2) Keep your back straight, bend your knees, and squat as low as possible while keeping your feet apart.
- 3) Lift with the strength of your legs and once you have picked up an object hold it close to you.
- 4) Never twist or turn while lifting.

Rest, Relaxation and Sleep:

- 1) Set aside a special time each day for complete mental and physical relaxation. This is important in the restoration, as well as maintenance, of normal health.
- 2) Take regular breaks during the day to move joints and stretch.
- 3) Be sure to get plenty of sleep to allow your body to recuperate and repair. Do not sleep sitting in a chair or on a couch with your head propped on the armrest. Lie down in bed when it is time to sleep.
- 4) Participate in simple exercises to strengthen your body.
- 5) Watch your posture at all times. Think TALL!