

Advice on posture for exercising

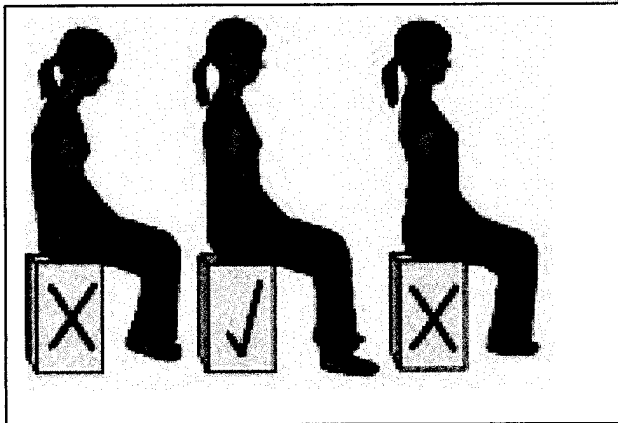
When you are exercising it is important to start from a good posture as this increases the benefit to your whole body.

Many people who have had an illness or have a long term condition need to start with an exercise programme in a sitting position. The warm up and level 1 from Macmillan's Get Active Feel Good DVD is great for this.

Sitting posture

Step 1 Sit on a firm stool or chair but do not use the backrest

Step 2 Put your feet about 30-45 cm apart and make sure your knees are directly over your feet and are not touching. If your knees are together there will be too much weight on the inside of your foot and your big toe.



Think about the position of your feet on the floor. Your weight should be shared between your heels, the outer borders of your feet, the balls of your feet and your big toe so your feet would make footprint on the floor

Step 3 Now think about your back position. Sit tall so that your head is balanced over your shoulders. Some people find it helpful to imagine 2 lines. The first line runs between the fronts of your shoulders. Make this as

long as possible. The second line runs vertically from your breast bone to the chair. Make this line as long as possible. This brings you into a neutral posture, but you will find your core muscles (tummy and back) are working hard to hold the position. This is your exercise starting position.

You may find you lose this position during the exercise. At the end get back in a correct posture again before you start the next exercise.

Standing posture

The same principles apply for exercises in standing. Stand tall, with your feet about 30cm apart. Think about your foot print on the floor. Make your knees soft – that is, very slightly bent rather than locked straight. Then think about your trunk. Imagine the 2 lines as with sitting posture to bring your trunk into a good starting posture for the exercises you are to do. Correct your posture between each exercise.