

SPINAL TIPS

How to care for your spine and nervous system and prevent fatigue, injury, and arthritis.

- 1) Avoid holding the same position when standing stationary for extended periods of time. Change position, shift your weight, use some sort of footrest. This is not bad posture. It is your body that is telling you these things.
- 2) Use care getting in and out of your car. Do not twist and turn while sticking one leg in. Sit down first, and then swing both legs in.
- 3) When bending over to lift something, bend at the hips and knees, not the back. When lifting, hold the object close to you and lift with your legs, while concentrating on keeping your back straight.
- 4) When working in a bend-over position, lean one hand or elbow on a knee. This distributes the weight and takes the strain off the back.
- 5) Ladies, no high heels (over 2") as these will cause stress and strain on the knees, hips, and feet, not to mention pressure on the nerves in the low back.
- 6) Men, don't carry fat wallets in your back pocket, especially when sitting for a long time. This tilts your hips and forces your low back to curve sideways.
- 7) We do not recommend sleeping on waterbeds as they are inadequate support for the back and eventually allow the muscles to get weak and "sloppy".
- 8) Slant boards, backswings, and other gravity inversion equipment are beneficial to your spine, as well as your glands, organs, leg veins, and brain, unless you have a history of stomach problems, high blood pressure, stroke, or heart problems. Two to five minutes once or twice a day is the right amount for most patients.
- 9) Rebounders or minitrampolines are an excellent way to exercise without trauma and risk of injury. As with any form of exercise, you must start slowly and progressively increase your workout.
- 10) Sleeping on your back is the most restful posture for your body. Sleeping on your side with the knees bent is the next best way, but sleeping on your stomach is very bad for your back. Remember, eating late at night will disrupt your sleeping cycle and prevent you from getting the rest you need.
- 11) Always stretch all your muscles before and after doing any sports or physical work. This will prevent injury and soreness while improving your performance.
- 12) Follow your doctor's instructions and do the right exercises in the right amount. Listen to your body's signals of pain, tightness, tingling, etc., and cease the activity and have your spine checked as soon as possible.
- 13) Always stretch your muscles upon awakening in the morning and before you retire in the evening.
- 14) Don't hold the phone to your ear by pinching it between your neck and shoulder.
- 15) Avoid sitting in soft chairs and deep couches.
- 16) Use shoulder rolls and sky reach exercises to relax muscles tight from hunching over your desk.
- 17) If you cross your legs, do it at the ankles only to avoid twisting of the low back.
- 18) If your neck gets tight or stiff, lie down on your back with cervical pillow and your knees bent. Slowly straighten your knees and you will feel a stretching of the muscles in your neck.