

Ashmore Health Centre

Committed to achieving your maximum health potential

SECRETS OF A HEALTHY BACK

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For appointments, please phone

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A happy, healthy back is a vital part of your total health picture. By adopting these simple postural habits, your back has the best chance of healing without the need for further intervention, saving you money and the distress that comes with back pain.

STAND ON TWO LEGS. Keep your weight evenly distributed on both legs. If you bias your weight onto one leg, your other leg and hip drops, tilting the pelvis. If the pelvis is uneven, the spine, which sits on the pelvis, can't be straight.

KEEP THE KNEES UNLOCKED. When you stand without your knees locked right back, your legs are 'springs'. If the knees are locked they are 'stumps'. You don't have to bend the knees as if you are riding a horse. Just keep the knees from being locked all the way back. This activates the major muscles of the back, pelvis & legs, taking strain from the neck, spine and pelvis.

SIT ON BOTH BUTTOCK CHEEKS.

Just like standing on one leg causes an imbalance in the hips, sitting with the weight biased on one buttock even a little twists and tilts the pelvis. By sitting evenly, you are giving the spine a stable and even foundation.

KEEP THE LEGS UNCROSSED. Never, ever cross your legs above the ankles when sitting. The mechanical forces thrown into the pelvis will cause a twist just like standing on one leg or sitting on one buttock cheek. With the foundations (hips) twisted, a great strain is forced into the joints of the spine, pelvis & neck.

BACK POCKET = NO WALLET! If you put a wallet under the corner of a chair, how stable is that chair? The same thing happens when you sit on a wallet. Your hips are unstable and twisted, resulting in damage to your back. Carry the wallet in a shirt or front pocket, never in the back pocket,.. ever!

LIFT CAREFULLY. If you can not stop at ANY point during a lift, you are either lifting too much or lifting incorrectly. Swinging a load, throwing a load, twisting with a load etc. is not controlled and is bad lifting technique. Never twist when lifting,.. ever! Any twisting happens in the feet, not the body.

Your feet do not have to be together but your back should be straight and all vertical (lifting) force should come from your legs. A simple way to think about lifting is to, "lift like a fork lift, pick it up, swivel, put it down".

WATER - A REAL MAGIC ELIXIR. By drinking around 1 litre of pure water for every 25 - 35 kilos of your body weight per day (1L:25kg is ideal), you will ensure that your kidneys have enough fluid to do their job happily.

When the kidneys are happy, the liver can do its job of keeping the chemistry of the blood happy. When the liver is doing its job, faster healing and a boosted immune system are the direct result. Your resistance to injury AND recovery rates are also greatly enhanced.

CROSS YOUR SHOULDER BAG. This means if your bag is hanging on your left side, the strap should be over your right. This stops you from automatically lifting a shoulder up to stop the strap sliding off.

Naturally, the lighter the bag, the better! Well fitted back packs are ideal, provided that both straps are used, not just one.

ALWAYS WEAR LOW HEELS. When the heel is elevated above the front of the foot, the geometry of the legs and back is severely altered, straining the joints and muscles of the pelvis, back and neck.

The magic formula - The heel must be no more than 1/5 of the length of your foot higher than your toes (from the heel to the base of you big toe not the tip!).

For a foot 20cm long, a 4 cm heel is acceptable and less is still better. Unless the heel is low, the back can't get better or stay better.