

LABORATORY 5.1



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Name _____

Date _____

Instructor _____

Section _____

Assessing Your Posture

Scan to view a demonstration
video of the posture test. ►



Poor posture is all too common and can lead to severe muscle and joint misalignment, possibly resulting in debilitating musculo-skeletal problems. In fact, poor posture often progresses so slowly that you may notice its symptoms (back and neck pain, stiffness, increased injury, and reduced range of motion) well before you notice a change in your posture.

The first step to improving posture is finding out what your posture looks like. Then you can compare it to “good” posture and determine the kind of exercise that will help you to correct the misalignments.

STEP 1: Take a Photograph to Determine Your Posture

You can determine what your posture looks like by taking a photograph of yourself standing against a wall. Have a friend or relative photograph you standing against a plain, flat surface, from the back and side.

You can compare your body position to a straight plane by placing a string behind you. Attach the string to an object overhead and then tie it to an object to the other end, just above the floor. Center the string between your feet in back view photograph. Center the string on the medial malleolus (bone protrusion on the side of the ankle) in the side view photograph.

STEP 2: Score Your Posture

Once you have the photographs of your posture from the back and side, compare them to the scoring chart on the following page. With each aspect of the posture shown, determine your score from the values shown at the top of the chart.

STEP 3: Review Your Scores

Review each of the posture aspects that you evaluated.

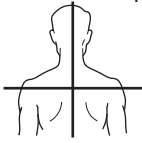
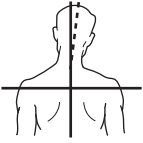
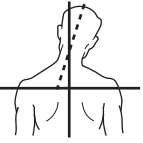
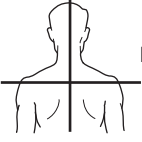
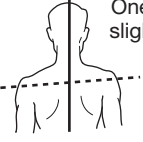
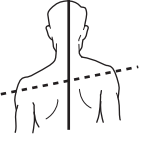
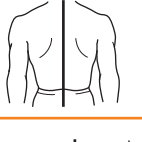
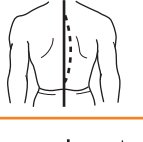
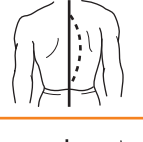
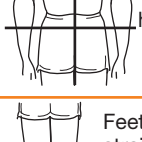
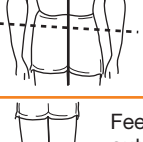
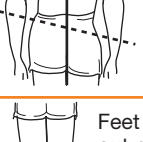
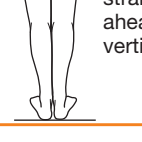

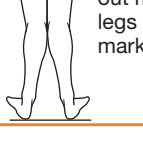
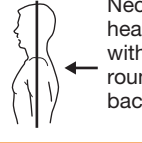
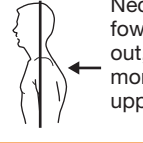
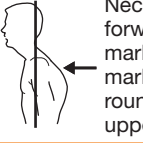
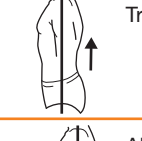
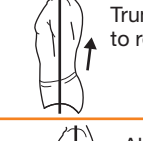
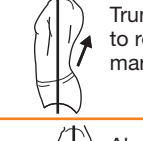
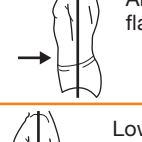
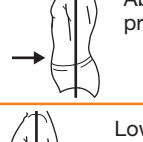
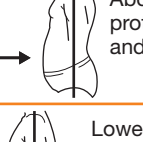
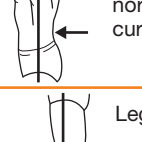
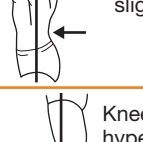
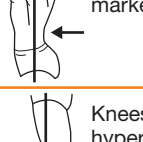
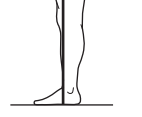
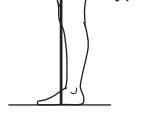
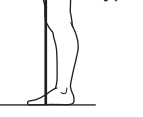
A score of 2 in all the categories indicates that your posture is good. A strength and flexibility exercise program should help you maintain your excellent posture.

If you scored a 1, you might want to find some flexibility exercise that will help you to realign that aspect.

If you scored a 0, begin flexibility exercises now to correct that aspect of your posture. This is important since the misalignment will almost certainly lead to pain and/or permanent alterations to your posture in the future.

Note the date of your assessment in the space provided on the right side of the chart. In 6 weeks, reassess your posture and your scores. Remember: Be conscious of your posture throughout the day. Continue to use both strength and flexibility exercise to help correct any misalignment you detect.

LABORATORY 5.1 (continued)

	Good—2	Fair—1	Poor—0	Scores	
Back View				Date 1	Date 2
Head	 <p>Head erect, gravity passes directly through center</p>	 <p>Head twisted or turned to one side slightly</p>	 <p>Head twisted or turned to one side markedly</p>		
Shoulders	 <p>Shoulders level horizontally</p>	 <p>One shoulder slightly higher</p>	 <p>One shoulder markedly higher</p>		
Spine	 <p>Spine straight</p>	 <p>Spine slightly curved</p>	 <p>Spine markedly curved laterally</p>		
Hips	 <p>Hips level horizontally</p>	 <p>One hip slightly higher</p>	 <p>One hip markedly higher</p>		
Knees and Ankles	 <p>Feet pointed straight ahead, legs vertical</p>	 <p>Feet pointed out, legs deviating outward at the knee</p>	 <p>Feet pointed out markedly, legs deviated markedly</p>		
Side View				Date 1	Date 2
Neck and Upper back	 <p>Neck erect, head in line with shoulders, rounded upper back</p>	 <p>Neck slightly forward, chin out, slightly more rounded upper back</p>	 <p>Neck markedly forward, chin markedly out, markedly rounded upper back</p>		
Trunk	 <p>Trunk erect</p>	 <p>Trunk inclined to rear slightly</p>	 <p>Trunk inclined to rear markedly</p>		
Abdomen	 <p>Abdomen flat</p>	 <p>Abdomen protruding</p>	 <p>Abdomen protruding and sagging</p>		
Lower back	 <p>Lower back normally curved</p>	 <p>Lower back slightly hollow</p>	 <p>Lower back markedly hollow</p>		
Legs	 <p>Legs straight</p>	 <p>Knees slightly hyperextended</p>	 <p>Knees markedly hyperextended</p>		

To submit the completed lab, save the form to your computer and email it to your instructor or upload it to their digital dropbox as directed.