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SELF MANAGEMENT: PATIENT'S SECTION

Postural correction [☆]

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Poor posture is ubiquitous in modern society. A sedentary lifestyle with too much sitting is usually to blame. Human evolution achieved the upright posture over 50,000 years ago. Yet, over the last 100 years as people have become more sedentary posture has become more slouched.

Slouching, slumping and stooping have become a muscle memory polluting posture during any activity. Lifting, bending and twisting with poor posture unfortunately can lead to shoulder,

neck and lower back disorders. Correcting poor posture is therefore an important first step in self-care for musculoskeletal disorders. Yoga begins with postural correction or alignment. Correcting posture and normalizing breathing patterns are the alpha and omega of all Yoga. This is the foundation for all the Yoga poses or asanas involving varying degrees of stretching. What follows are 2 Yoga poses to help increase awareness of the upright posture.

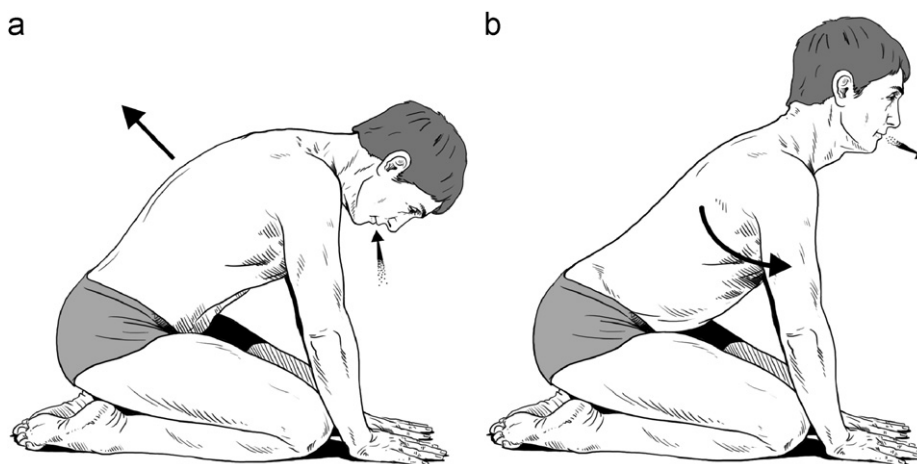


Figure 1 Straight arm mid back exercise: (a) start position and (b) end position.

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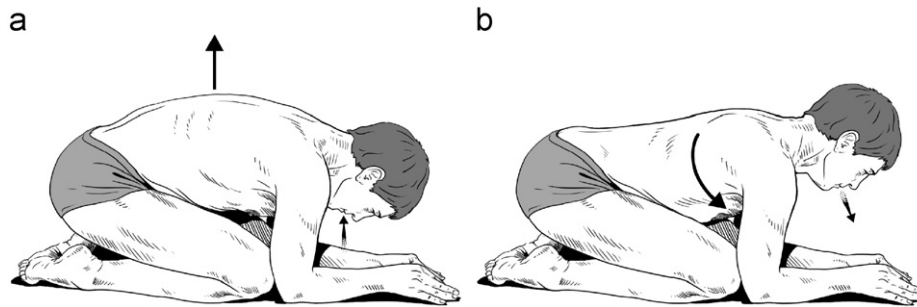


Figure 2 Bent arm mid back exercise: (a) start position and (b) end position.

Straight arm mid back exercise (Figure 1)

- Kneel back on your heels
- Place your hands, palm down, in front of your knees
- Round your back like an angry cat and breathe in
- Stick your chest out, while keeping your chin in
- Look straight ahead, relax your shoulders down and exhale slowly and actively through pursed lips
- Repeat 8–10 times, twice daily

Note: If your knees do not tolerate this position place a rolled up towel behind your knees.

Bent arm mid back exercise (Figure 2)

- Kneel back on your heels
- Place your elbows in front of your knees and rest on your forearms and palms
- Round your back like an angry cat and breathe in
- Stick your chest out, while keeping your chin in
- Look straight ahead, relax your shoulders down and exhale slowly and actively through pursed lips
- Repeat 8–10 times, twice daily

Note: If your knees do not tolerate this position place a rolled up towel behind your knees.

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