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MAY/JUNE 2013

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## STAND TALL

CHANGE  
YOUR  
POSTURE...  
CHANGE  
YOUR LIFE

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29 PAGE  
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE  
to live your dream

# CHANGE YOUR POSTURE

## CHANGE YOUR LIFE

*Physiotherapist Jason T Smith addresses the core issue of health and fitness.*


**O**NE OF THE MOST fundamental attributes to lifelong physical health is building daily positive habits that encourage good posture and core stability. With simple techniques, and a growing awareness of how these attributes contribute to movement, you will have the right physiological basis for enduring wellness.

### START WITH A SOLID FOUNDATION

Posture is like the foundation of a house. A strong and intelligently designed structure is essential for quality construction and a safe home. If the foundation of your house isn't sound, the aesthetic and design of the home will suffer, the walls and ceilings will crack, your carpets will ripple and the floors will become uneven. Before long your lovely home is in need of repair. Anyone who understates the importance of correct posture is likely to end up in a similar state of needing extensive repair. Continual neglect to your postural health will inevitably lead to a series of complex problems.

### THE STRENGTH TO DEFY GRAVITY

When you think of improving your posture, you must consider both your stationary posture and dynamic posture – your body's position during movement. Many people may have mastered an effective static posture when sitting at a desk, but often it all falls apart as soon as they begin to move.



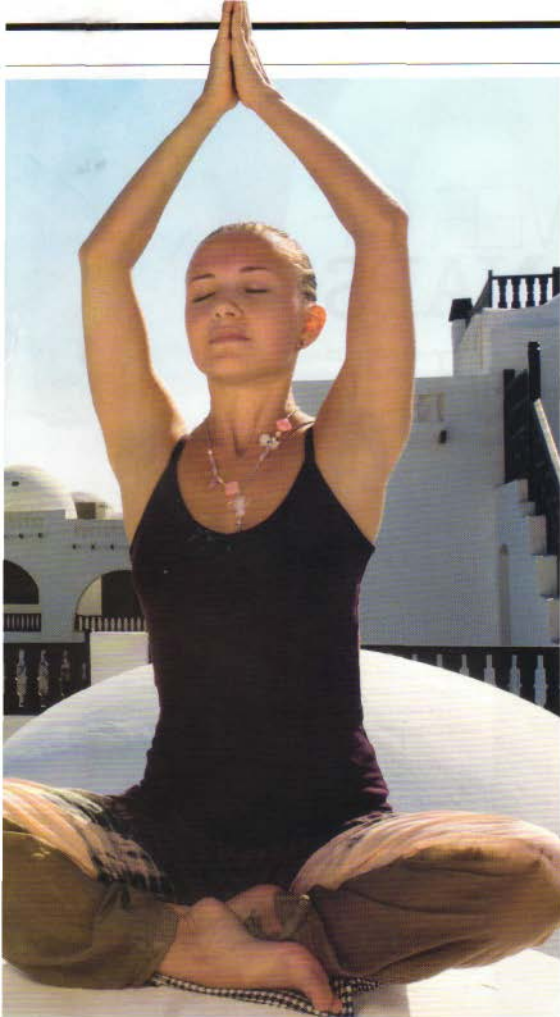
When you move you are essentially defying gravity and the anti-gravity activities you do rely heavily on the major muscle groups of the gluteals, quadriceps and calves. These 'anti-gravity' muscles in combination with the core stabilising muscles of the spine are together responsible for enabling you to maintain correct posture and alignment. Enhance your dynamic posture and incorporate the following simple exercises into your physical routine three times a week:

- Bridges ■ Lunges
- Wall squats ■ Calf raises.

### AT THE CORE OF IT ALL

If posture makes up the foundation of all movement, core stability is the attribute that enables you to control the scaffolding around it. You can improve your core stability by actively exercising the deep, small stabilising muscles beneath the diaphragm, pelvis and lumbar region (lower back). Practicing Pilates under expert instruction is also an excellent way to improve your core strength. Additionally, correct your posture by making the following adjustments:

- Stand tall and elongate. Feel your chest open and your body lengthen.
- Keep your chin horizontal with the floor, and touch the wall with the back of your head.
- Pinch your shoulder blades together without poking out your stomach.
- Flatten your stomach by tightening your abdominals.
- Position your heels against the wall and let your knees flex comfortably.



### STAY ON THE BALL

A fun and proven way to improve your posture and stimulate your core stabilising muscles, is to practice 'dynamic sitting' with a Swissball. Sitting on a Swissball creates an immediate dynamic environment demanding continuous micro (if not, macro) adjustments to your posture. If your employment or lifestyle doesn't require much sitting, then use the Swissball at meal times or occasionally when watching

television.

In the gym you can do some basic core strengthening exercises using a Swissball such as:

- Ball bridges ■ Ball rotations
- Thoracic extensions
- Wheelbarrow.

Great posture is something that eventually should take very little effort on your part. Commit to your postural health, see your physiotherapist for an assessment.

### BRIDGES



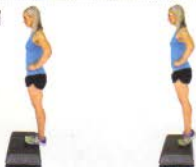
### LUNGES



### WALL SQUATS



### CALF RAISES



### BALL BRIDGES



### BALL ROTATIONS



### THORACIC EXTENSIONS



### WHEELBARROW



### By JASON T SMITH

Jason is the founder of Back In Motion Health Group, one of Australia's leading providers of physiotherapy and related services. Jason's new book *Get Yourself Back In Motion* (\$34.95) is available at Back In Motion Health Group practices, major book retailers and online bookstores. For more information