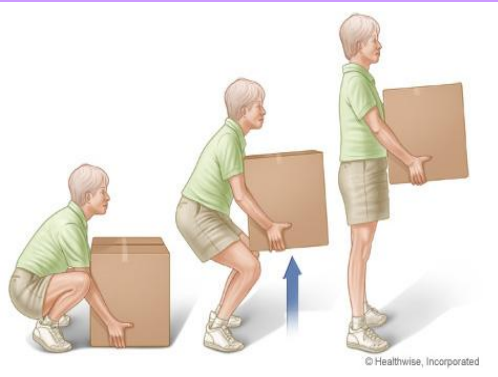


# Body and Lifting Mechanics

## Patient Information Sheet

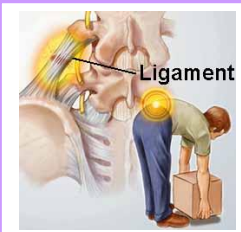


*The benefits of using good body mechanics and posture are universal. By taking time to properly, reach, lift, push, pull, and carry objects, you can reduce the risk of injury by preventing stress, strain and fatigue on your body.*

Demonstrating good body mechanics means performing a movement activity when your center of gravity (COG) and anything you lift is contained within an adequate base of support (BOS). Simply put, your BOS is what contacts the ground and the space in between. Therefore, widening your BOS increases your balance. Decreasing strain to muscles and ligaments can keep your body healthy and pain free.

Your COG is located just below your waist. The closer an object is to your COG, the lower the strain to your spine and muscles. When you lift something, widen your BOS and keep the object close to your COG. Be aware of your posture during daily activities. Correcting your posture may help decrease back and neck pain. Good posture should be a part of all activities to minimize harmful stress to the spine.

Good body mechanics includes good posture. Good posture also helps improve your ventilation and respiration. Visualize a plumb line hanging from each ear lobe. In good posture, the plumb line will drop straight down from the ear lobe through the shoulder area, down the middle of the arm and through the anklebone. Your chin should be slightly tucked, and your shoulders should be slightly back and level. The pelvis should be shifted forward, allowing the hips to align with the ankles. (see diagram to your right)



***You put less strain on your body and decrease pain when you use good body mechanics and posture!***

*For more information: Contact PT/PTA*

### References:

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Created by: Jessica Andrews and Theresa Baker

### Strategies to use Good Body Mechanics and Posture while Pushing, Reaching and Lifting:

#### Pushing Activities

- Make sure area is cleared of any obstruction that may be a safety issue.
- Face the object square with hip and knees partially flexed with a neutral spine.
- Push the object with partially bent elbows while using both arms and legs.
- Keep your stomach tight.
- Carry objects close to body.

#### Reaching Activities

- If objects are above head use a foot stool to reach.
- Slide the object close to your body for stability and balance.
- Keep the object close to your body as you step down off the stool.
- Do not reach and twist your body.

#### Sitting with Good Posture

- Sitting with good posture involves keeping your back against the chair, shoulders relaxed, elbows on arm rests, and feet flat on the floor without crossing the legs.
- You may want to add a rolled towel under lumbar spine to maintain the normal curve.
- When sitting in a chair that rolls and pivots, make sure to use your whole body to turn and avoid twisting at your waist.
- If working at a desk adjust the height of the chair, so that your materials are closer to you.
- When standing up from a chair, move to the edge of your seat and stand up using your legs. Avoid bending at the waist.
- Do not sit in the same position for more than thirty minutes. Add walking and stretching into your day.