



GUIDELINES FOR A HEALTHY SPINE

1. **Get regular adjustments** especially if you are under stress, become ill, are pregnant, or have had an accident.
2. **After any injury see your chiropractor for a health check.** A visit to the chiropractor can prevent lasting detrimental effects that can occur months or years later.
3. **Don't sit on uneven surfaces.** Remove items from back pockets such as wallets, phones, or car keys before sitting down. The height difference puts strain on the pelvis causing alignment problems to occur and reoccur.
4. **Sleep position matters.** Avoid sleeping on your stomach as it places stress on the spine especially the neck. Instead try to sleep on your side with a pillow between your knees and your neck supported in line with your spine. You can also sleep on your back, though it may be necessary to place a pillow under your knees to relax your back muscles.
5. **Keep moving.** Ease lumbo-pelvic inflammation associated with sitting for too long by getting up for at least 5 minutes every hour. Try putting an item you use often, like the phone or stapler, on the other side of the room to encourage you to get up and move. Sitting on a stability ball or vestibular disc while you work is also beneficial.
6. **Keep your muscle warm and flexible.** Muscles do not like to be cold, or kept in a shortened position, for extended periods of time. Be aware of air vents blowing on the muscles, like ceiling fans, drafts etc. Don't skip stretching after exercise as it helps lengthen contracted muscles.
7. **Use proper form when lifting and carrying heavy objects.** The best way to strain your back is to lift an object by bending at the waist and twisting or rotating at the hips. Instead, face the heavy object, bend at the knees, and lift the object with your legs. Carry the object close to your hips and turn with the whole body to face the direction the heavy object is to be moved to. Use your legs to place the object down, and do not bend at the waist.
8. **Stay hydrated.** The adult human body is up to 60% water. It's important to replenish lost water every day to support optimal body function. Try to drink half your body's weight in ounces out of glass or stainless steel containers; plastic containers have been shown to leach hormone disrupting chemicals, such as BPAs, into drinking water.

9. **Eat organic meats, vegetables, and dairy when possible.**
Conventional farming methods use hormones and antibiotics to stimulate animal growth. The extra hormones when consumed are disruptive to the endocrine system and super doses of antibiotics have been linked to drug resistant microbes such as *E.coli* and *Salmonella*. Additionally, conventionally farmed animals are often fed GMO corn and soy, instead of a traditional diet of grass, which alters the ideal 1:1 ratio of essential fatty acids in their tissue, milk, and eggs. The ratio is heavily skewed toward omega-6 fatty acids which when not balanced with omega-3 fatty acids can lead to systemic inflammation and heart disease among other chronic conditions. Finally, organic produce is recommended over non-organic because it is difficult to impossible the remove the pesticides from non-organic produce via washing or peeling.

10. **Supplement with Omega-3s.** Take 3g (3000mg) daily. They are the foundation of the nervous system, hormones, have anti-inflammatory properties, and are responsible for keeping cell membranes flexible and permeable. Good dietary sources are avocado, raw nuts and seeds, and fish. Cold pressed oils are the best. Oil tips: As soon as you heat a good oil (e.g. extra virgin olive oil) it turns into a bad fat. Olive oil should be poured onto food cold to reap the benefits. Use an oil that can handle high heat such as coconut or sunflower for sautéing and frying.