

The 42 Pound Head

“For every inch of Forward Head Posture, it can increase the weight of the head on the spine by an additional 10 pounds.” -Kapandji, Physiology of Joints, Vol. 3

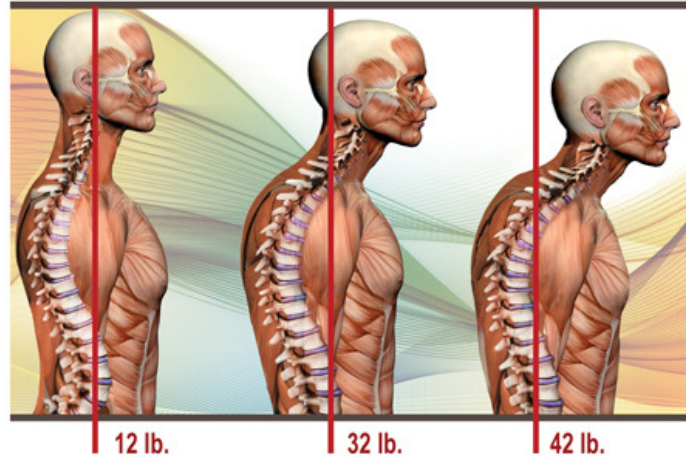


Figure 1

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The effects of poor posture go far beyond just looking awkward. In fact, the January, 2004 issue of the American Journal of Pain Management reported on the relationship of poor posture and chronic pain conditions including low back pain, neck related headaches, and stress-related illnesses. "The extra pressure imposed on the neck from poor posture flattens the normal cervical curve resulting in abnormal strain on muscles, ligaments, fascia and bones."

Research presented at the 31st Annual International Conference of the IEEE EMBS Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, (2009) stated; "Over time poor posture results in pain, muscle aches, tension and headache and can lead to long term complications such as osteoarthritis. Forward head carriage may promote accelerated aging of intervertebral joints resulting in degenerative joint disease."

It appears posture impacts and modulates all bodily functions from breathing to hormonal production. Spinal pain, headache, mood, blood pressure, pulse and lung capacity are among the many conditions influenced by faulty posture.

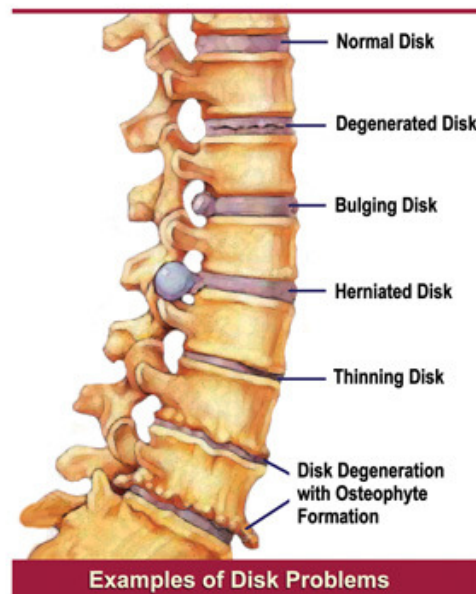


Figure 3

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“90% of the stimulation and nutrition to the brain is generated by the movement of the spine” Dr. Roger Sperry, (Nobel Prize Recipient for Brain Research)

Additionally, Dr Roger Sperry demonstrated that 90% of the brain's energy output is used in relating the physical body to gravity. Only 10% has to do with thinking, metabolism, and healing.

Dr. Alf Breig, a Swedish neurosurgeon and Nobel Prize recipient coined the term 'adverse neural tension' to describe the mechanism by which loss of normal cervical lordotic curve creates dysfunction and disease.

Through cadaver studies, Dr. Breig demonstrated that neck flexion could stretch the spinal cord 5-7 cm causing tensioning of the meninges (covering of the brain and spinal cord) and elicit measurable pressure on brain-stem nuclei (nerve control centers) which control all basic life functions. The increased compression led to dysregulation of basic metabolic control functions. Recall that the spinal cord is actually only "tethered" to the bony skeleton in the upper cervical and lowest sacral areas (top and bottom ends of the spine). In between these polar attachments, the spinal cord is relatively free to move up and down. Free-floating mobility of the cord is essential in allowing bending and twisting of our bodies. Anything that reduces that freedom, i.e., exaggerated or flattened spinal curves, dural impingement, etc. increases cord and brain stem tension. Increased tensile stress on the cord and brain stem not only interferes with the control of basic body processes such as breathing and motor control but in cases of dural impingement, may encourage painful cervical radiculopathies.

Erik Dalton, Ph.D.

The above article shows how subluxations of the spine, from injured spinal joints that have healed in wrong, can lead to poor posture, subluxation degeneration of the spine, impaired nervous system function, and decreased whole body health.

That in a nutshell is why Chiropractic is so important. Correcting the problem in its earliest phases, from shortly after the birth process and onward, will help to maintain spine and nervous system health, and decrease the devastating effects of the subluxation complex on the body.



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