



POSTURE

LYING

It is important to maintain good posture even when lying. Good posture helps your body to move more easily and prevent injuries. Often after prolonged poor posture your body will have adaptive shortening on the muscles and ligaments, while in other areas you will have lengthened and weakening; further still you will have developed different ways of holding your body. Often these are incorrect. If you do stretching and strengthening exercises to assist with these changed muscles and ligaments your body will be in a better position to overcome the bad habits you have developed.

It is interesting to note that when sleeping your body is often still, the discs (between the vertebrae) are filled with fluid so if there is a problem in this area it can be exaggerated first thing in the morning. It is important to do the exercises you have been given when you first wake up, these squash the fluid into the right position. Interestingly, if you were to measure yourself in the morning you will be taller than at night.

While lying down people will often find that their pelvis and lower body are not in alignment. Or when lying on the side, the weight of their top leg causes muscles to tighten up around the nerves in the buttock. These problems can be overcome by sleeping with a towel rolled lengthways to fill in the gap under the ribs (see Diagram) and/or a firm pillow between the knees to lift the leg and take the pressure from the buttock. Some people also find relief when the top knee is straight and the bottom knee is bent.

Here are some simple hints you can do to prevent back pain while you sleep (these might not work for everyone) -

- Sleep with a rolled up towel around your waist (this helps prevent strain while you sleep).
- Make sure that your mattress is firm - with no sag in it. You should be able to get 10 years out of a mattress.
- Place a pillow between your knees in side lying or under your knees when lying on your back.



Waking up with NECK PAIN is often caused because the head is resting in an awkward position. The type of pillow you should use is dependent on the position that you sleep in.

HINT - A back sleeper will generally need a lower pillow (unless they are too stiff and curved through the trunk).

HINT - Side sleepers need a pillow that supports the neck in line with the trunk. A person with wider shoulders will need a higher pillow and slimmer shoulders need a lower pillow. They should also be careful that they do not poke their chins too far forwards while they are sleeping, as this will put extra stress on the tissues. Side sleepers will usually respond better to a raised edge of the pillow, this can be achieved by rolling a small towel length ways and placing it under the pillow case. Alternatively a contour pillow could be used. Please speak to your PhysioMaxx physiotherapist about this.



PLEASE NOTE initially sleeping with a rolled up towel or contour pillow may cause discomfort, persevere as you will not look back.