

# POSTURE AND BREATHING

## An Intimate and Vital Relationship

Breathing is necessary to survive, but breathing effectively and efficiently allows us to thrive.

Good posture maximizes the available space in the rib cage for the lungs to fill to capacity. Big breaths keep the ribs moving freely and make it easier to fill the lungs. More fresh air in the lungs means more oxygen going to the brain, the muscles, the internal organs etc.

Good posture facilitates the muscles of respiration to work comfortably without demanding help from the muscles of the neck and upper chest. Over use of the muscles of the neck and upper chest can be the cause of neck and shoulder pain.

The strong trunk muscles that are necessary to maintain good posture provide a source of strength that the muscles of respiration depend on so they can work easily and effectively. A stable trunk allows us to breathe AND move rather than breathe OR move. And the strong trunk muscles help maintain the health of our lungs by enabling strong coughing to keep the lungs clear.

The flexibility and strength inherent with a good posture allow our body to automatically use different areas of the lungs when the demands of our activity or position compromise natural easy breathing.

SO YOU SEE, good posture is not just for runway models. It is equally important for the child, the adult, the senior, the labourer, the professional, the athlete, the musician, the housewife, and even the politician. Good posture is not just for appearance, you reap the benefits with every breath you take.

Physiotherapists can advise you how to maximize your muscle strength, muscle balance and flexibility to achieve your best posture.