

## Posture Pad

The **Posture Pad** was invented by Bob and Brad, the two most famous physical therapists on the Internet (in their opinion, of course)! Look for their Bob and Brad channel on YouTube!



Let's Straighten Up Your Posture!

The Posture Pad is an easy to use, multifunctional tool created to decrease neck and upper back pain. It's ideal for correcting rounded out backs and rounded forward shoulders caused by prolonged poor positioning. The Posture Pad is the perfect way to provide the pressure needed to loosen up the joints in your neck and back. It's time to stretch your way to a pain free back and neck!

### **Test for you to try:**

This is to help determine if bones of the upper back have become frozen into one position. Have your elbows at your side and attempt to bend your neck and upper back in reverse (Backwards). Have a friend look at you or photograph you. **(See photo A)** What we see in many cases patients cannot reverse the curve! It remains curved forward even when they extend back. **(See photo B)**. That is because the joints of the spine have stiffened up and can no longer move like they should.



Photo A



Photo B

## Problems with flexed and tightened joints:

1. Makes you look much older than you are.
2. Easy to develop neck hump. The poor posture leads to eventual development of that bump at the base of your neck.
3. The muscles of the neck and upper back must work harder to hold your head up eventually resulting in the muscles developing knots and scarring.
4. In the rounded forward position, there will be increased pressure on the discs between the bones and the nerves coming off the spinal cord resulting in pain going down your arm.
5. The joints in the neck can get jammed causing neck pain and headaches.

The difficulty with the jammed joints is that they are difficult to “unjam”. It is an absolute challenge to get those joints moving appropriately again.

One of our goals with the **Posture Pad** is to provide the sufficient counter pressure or leverage to loosen up those jammed joints. The following exercises can be performed once a day. To speed along results, you might consider 2-3x per day.

### ***How to use the Posture Pad? (Beginner to Advanced)***

*None of these exercises should cause high degrees of pain! On a pain scale of 0-10, (0 being no pain and 10 being excruciating pain), you should go no higher than a 3. Many describe it as “a good hurt”.*

### **Using the Posture Pad While Sitting**

1. Many will want to start by using the **Posture Pad** in your chair. Place the thick rounded edge just below your shoulder blades (in the back of your chair). The thinner edge of the **Posture Pad** should be directed down toward the seat. **(See photo C)**. Lean over the thicker edge as tolerated.



Photo C

2. Place your knuckle gently on the side of your head and attempt to open your elbows like the wings of a butterfly, **(See photo D)** Another method is to make a field goal with your arms and stretch your arms back, **(See photo E)**.



Photo D



Photo E

3. The next step would be to try some tennis balls in the **Posture Pad** while seated. There are two types of balls. The lighter balls are softer and a good place to start. Use the softer balls in the upper holes. Place your knuckle on the side of your head (**See photo F**) and attempt to open your elbows like the wings of a butterfly, (**See photo G**). You may also try this stretch with the harder, darker balls.



Photo F



Photo G

### Using the Balls While Lying Down on Back

4. Many people would prefer to start with the balls and not the pad. Place one ball between the shoulder blade and spine (**See photo H**) The goal is to put the ball in 6 areas indicated by the Xs, (**See photo I**). The light blue balls are slightly softer than the dark blue. Use whichever ball you like.



Photo H



Photo I

5. After using the balls only, one could progress to use the **Posture Pad** with no balls. While lying down, place the **Posture Pad** in your mid back. Have two pillows in place behind the **Posture Pad**, (See photo J). As tolerated, extend your upper back over the round edge of the Posture Pad.



Photo J

Again place your knuckles on the side of your head and attempt to open your elbows like the wings of a butterfly, (See photo K).



Photo K

6. Begin to get pinpoint pressure on the muscles of the spine by using the softer light blue tennis balls in the lower hole, **(Photo L)**. Do not have the balls directly over the spine, up into the neck, or below the ribcage.



Photo L

7. You can also try the softer light blue balls in the upper holes, See **(Photo M)**. Again, apply counterpressure on the six areas between the shoulder blades. (30-60 seconds per area is fine). You may do this for a few days.



Photo M

8. You can begin to get pinpoint pressure on the muscles of the spine by starting with the harder dark blue tennis balls in the lower holes, See **(Photo N)**. Do not have the balls go over the spine, up into the neck, or below the ribcage.



Photo N

9. You can also place the harder dark blue balls in the upper holes, See **(Photo O)**. Do not have the balls go over the spine, up into the neck, or below the ribcage.



Photo O

10. You can also do this: Remove balls from the **Posture Pad**. Remove the two pillows for your head. Your head will extend over the **Posture Pad**. Lie down on your back with your head extended over the edge and place your knuckles on the side of your head and open your arms like the wings of a butterfly to the side, **(See Photo P)**.



Photo P

11. You can also place the harder dark blue balls in the upper holes, (**See Photo Q**). Remove the two pillows for your head. Your head will extend over the **Posture Pad**. Lie down on the back head extended over the edge and apply counterpressure on the six areas between the shoulder blades, (30-60 sec per area is fine). If you can tolerate this aggressive stretch, you will do it once a day.



Photo Q

Once you have loosened up the joints you should continue to stretch at least once a day for maintenance. You should also consider some form of posture strengthening to help keep an appropriate posture.

### How to Perform Posture Strengthening

1. Lie on the **Posture Pad** face down, head over the back edge of the **Posture Pad**, (**See Photo R**). Lift your arm like Superman flying (**See photo S**). Hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat 10x. Do 3 sets.



Photo R



Photo S

2. Maintenance in the chair. In a seated position start by using the **Posture Pad** in your chair. Place the thick rounded edge just below your shoulder blades (in the back of your chair). The thinner edge of the **Posture Pad** should be directed down toward the seat (**See Photo T**). Lean over the thicker edge as tolerated. Perform a chin tuck (**See Photo U**) while simultaneously placing your arms in the shape of a W, (**See Photo V**). Hold 5-10 sec. Repeat 4-5 x. Repeat throughout the day.



Photo T



Photo U



Photo V

### Precautions and Warnings

As stated in the directions when performing these stretches none of these exercises should cause high degrees of pain. On a pain scale of 0-10 (0 being no pain and 10 being excruciating pain), you should go no higher than a 3. Many describe it as “a good hurt”. Use of the **Posture Pad** should be done in the beginner mode to prevent extreme soreness. Some degree of soreness is expected.

Do not use the **Posture Pad** in any of the following conditions:

1. Osteoporosis/Osteopenia.
2. On children.
3. Don't use it on a compression fracture or any other fracture.
4. Don't use it on an area where you suspect cancer.
5. Don't use it on an area that has undergone surgery, has an open sore, shingles, or stitches.
6. Don't use it on Ankylosing Spondylitis, or Scheuermann's Osteochondritis.

### Bonus Use of Posture Pad - Calf Stretcher:

The **Posture Pad** can be used to stretch your calves. It actually works quite well for that. Just flip the **Posture Pad** over so the side with holes are down. You are now ready to stretch one calf (**See Photo W**) or both calves (**See Photo X**). Stretch with your knees straight and bent.





Photo W



Photo X