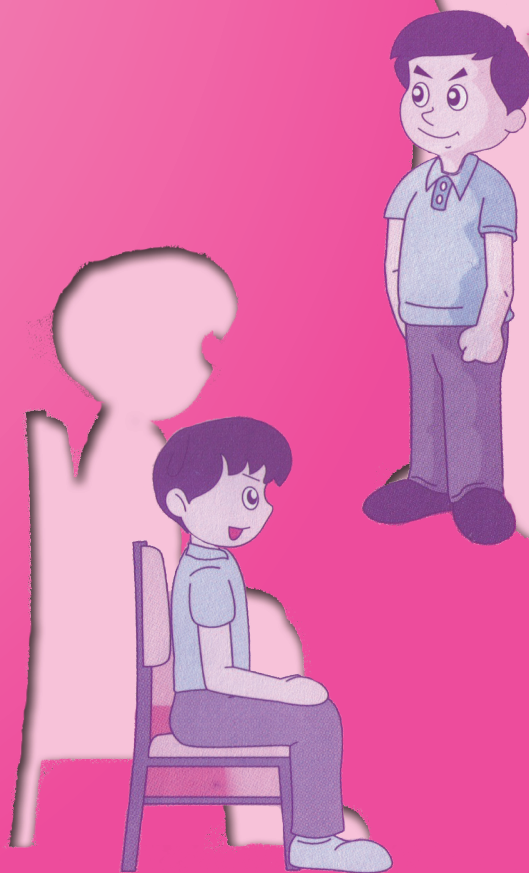


GOOD POSTURE AND HEALTHY SPINE



The spine is the main support structure of our body. The vertebrae, intervertebral discs, ligaments and muscles coordinate with each other to stabilize the spine and allow different movements and postures of our body.

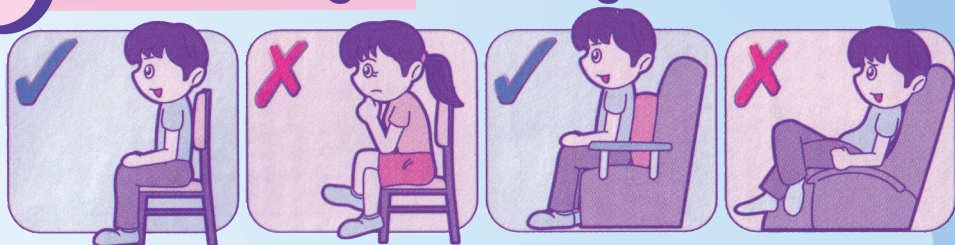
Childhood and adolescence are important stages of skeletal development. Maintaining a correct posture and good spinal health not only makes us look smart, but also prevents back injuries.

Maintain a proper posture

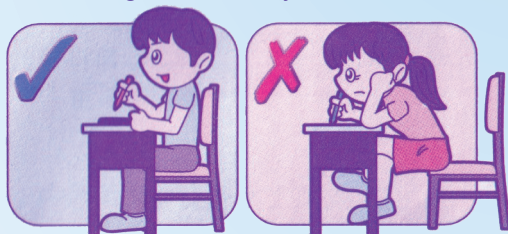
1 When standing or walking



2 When sitting and resting

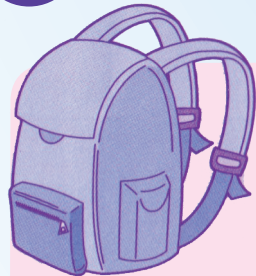


Keep your neck and back straight with both your feet on the floor



The desk and chair should be of appropriate height and distance to each other

3 When carrying the school bag



Use backpack with adjustable padded shoulder straps



Carry a bag on both straps and the bag should be close to your back. The bag should weigh no more than 10% of your body weight

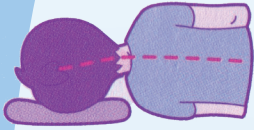
If carrying the bag on one shoulder or with one hand, switch sides frequently



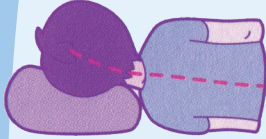
4

When sleeping

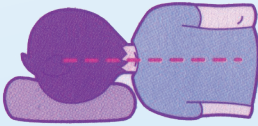
Pillow



Too low

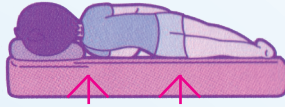


Too high

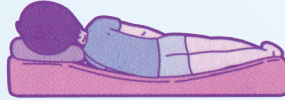


The height of the pillow should keep your spine straight

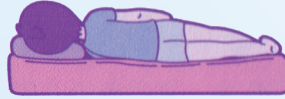
Mattress



Too hard



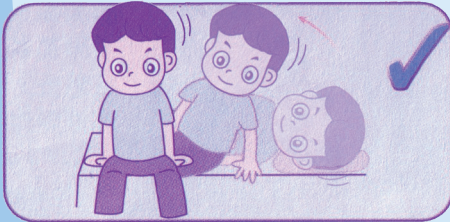
Too soft



Appropriate firmness: distribute body weight evenly

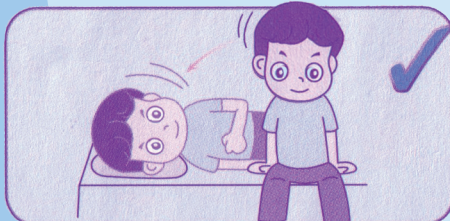
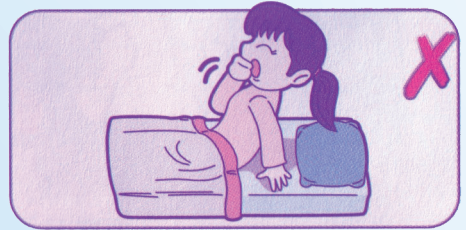
5

When getting up or lying down



A. Getting up from bed

Lie on the side, put the legs by the side and sit up



B. Lying down on bed

Sit on the edge of your bed, lie on your side and then your back



6

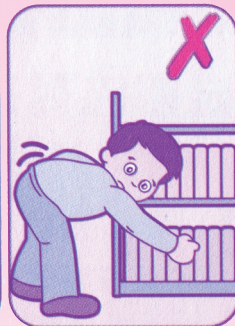
When moving objects



Use platform or step stool to reach high objects. Avoid over-stretching your arms



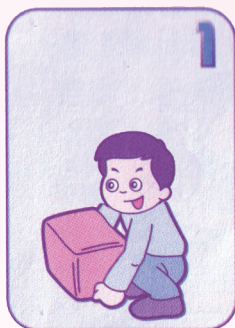
Bend your knees instead and squat down. Do not bend forward



Divide a heavy load into several smaller loads and carry them with both hands. Do not move multiple heavy objects at the same time



Ask for somebody's help if the object is too heavy. Move heavy objects with a trolley



Bend your knees and squat down, keep your back straight, hold the object close to your body, use your thigh muscles to lift the object and do not bend forward

Improve spine health

Do regular and appropriate exercises

- Strengthen the abdominal and back muscles
- Improve the flexibility and endurance of the body
- Increase bone density
- Prevent neck and back muscle soreness

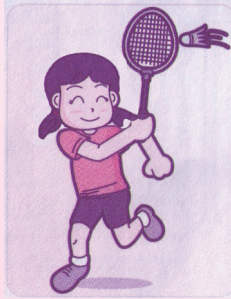
1 Exercises

Have at least one hour of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activities daily, such as

Jogging



Badminton



Rope skipping



Swimming

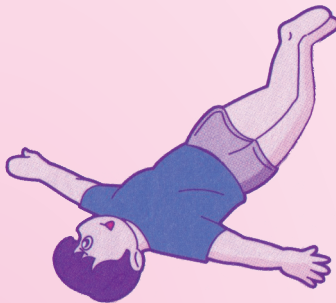


Back exercises

- Repeat each set of movement 10 to 15 times and hold each posture for 5 seconds. Practise these sets of movement daily

Exercise 1:

- Lie on your back, slightly bend your knees and stretch your arms
- Swing your legs sideways and turn your head to the side opposite to your legs

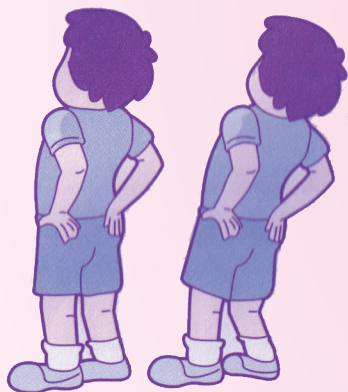


Exercise 2:

- Sit up with your back straight
- Rotate your upper body backward
- Look at your shoulders and position your arms on the back of the chair



- Repeat each set of movement several times and hold each posture for 5 seconds. Practise these sets of movement daily



Exercise 1:

- Put your hands on your lower back
- Lean backward



Exercise 2:

- Stand with your feet slightly apart
- Raise your right arm and bend your waist to the left, and vice versa



Exercise 3:

- Stand up with your hands hanging down
- Pull your shoulders blade closer

2 Healthy diet

Prevent overweight to reduce spine loads and improve spine health. Healthy diet is essential. We should eat according to the recommendations of food pyramid. We should also eat more calcium-rich foods, e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, bean curd and sardine with bones, etc. to keep our bone healthy.



Bad Posture

1 Why do I get low back pain so easily?

If you sit in the same position for long periods of time or perform repetitive motions (e.g. using computer, playing electronic games, etc.), you may get a muscle strain. Sustaining a poor posture, doing inappropriate/ strenuous exercises or being overweight will cause ligament and intervertebral disc strains, resulting in soreness in neck and back. Seek medical advice if the pain persists.

2 Why do I have a round upper back?

Slouching, slumping and other types of poor posture can cause muscle straining, the ligaments are over-stretched and a round upper back is formed. A round upper back not only affects one's appearance, but also leads to tiredness of shoulders and restriction in chest expansion. There are many other causes of a round upper back. Consult your doctor if you have any enquiries.

3 How can I check my standing posture?

The “wall test”: When standing with your head and back against the wall, there will only be a small gap between the neck/waist and the wall (about the thickness of the palm) if your posture is correct. If this gap is too large or too small, it means that the standing posture is incorrect.

