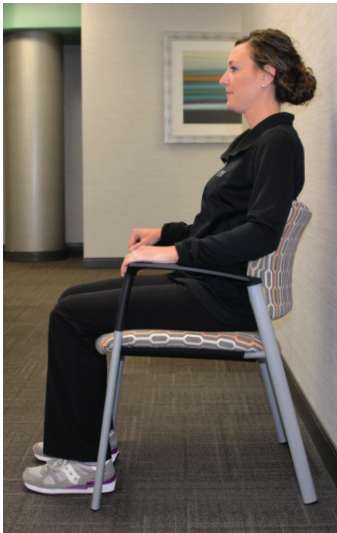


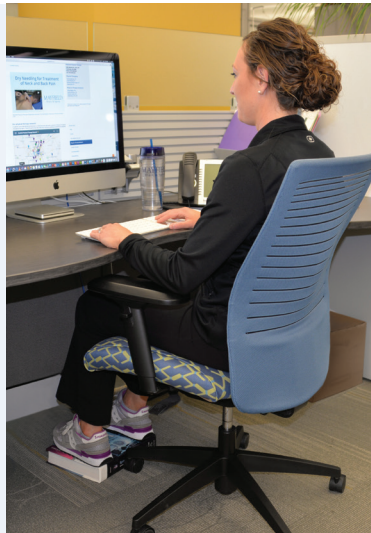
Chiari Posture and Body Mechanics

Good posture involves training your body to stand, walk, sit, and lie in positions where the least strain is placed on supporting muscles and ligaments during movement or weight-bearing activities.

If any of the following guidelines causes an increase of back pain or spreading of pain to the legs, do not continue the activity and seek the advice of a doctor or physical therapist.



Sitting Posture: Position yourself all the way back in the chair. Sit with your shoulders over your hips, your feet flat on the floor, and your chin aligned over your chest.



Sitting at a Desk: Good posture starts with your shoulders over your hips and with good low-back support. Your elbows and knees should be bent to 90 degrees, and your feet should be flat on the floor or supported with a stool or phonebook. There should be a finger-width gap between your knees and the chair. The computer monitor should be at eye level. Your ears should be aligned with your shoulders. The computer mouse should be close enough that your elbows remain in a bent position. Finally, your pen and phone should be kept within 14 to 16 inches of your hands.



Using a Cellphone: Rest your arms on your waist as a brace to raise the arm holding your cellphone to face level. Sitting in a soft recliner with a high back and foot rest will help you maintain this position. Avoiding stress and noise will also help you relax your neck muscles.



Using a Hairdryer: Stand upright to blow dry your hair. Do not bend over at the waist or bend your head at the neck.



Holding a Child: Do not bend over to pick up a child; squat down and then lift with your legs. Hold the child close to the center of your body instead of propped on your hip.



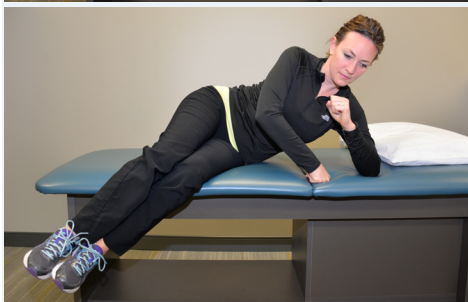
Utilize a brace technique while coughing and sneezing. We call it our “home alone” pose. As you feel the need to cough or sneeze, support your chin and allow your body to flex forward, attempting to prevent a whiplash effect at your neck. If you have low back pain, be careful how far forward you flex, but allow enough movement that it comes from your body and not your neck.



Log Roll: While lying on your back, bend your knees and push through your legs to help you roll.



Roll onto your side, keeping your hips, shoulders, and ears moving together.



Place your top hand on the bed and push up while lowering your legs to the floor.



Slowly raise your body while lowering your legs to assume an upright position.

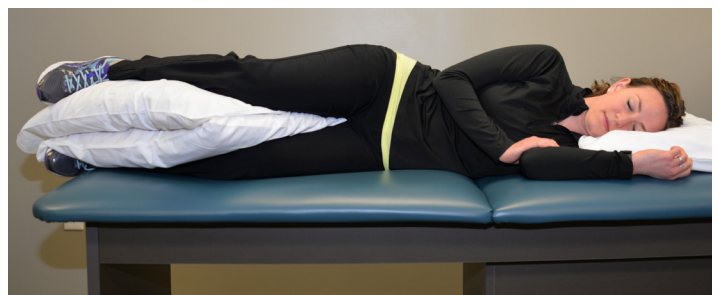


Tying Shoes: Place your foot on your opposite knee or use a long-handled shoehorn to keep you from bending too far forward.



Proper Sleeping Posture: When lying on your back, place a pillow under your knees for support. Finding ways to support your neck is also key for a good night’s sleep. Your pillow should support your neck as well as your head. Elevate the head of your bed 4-6 inches.

The blue pillow shown is one we find helps to cradle the neck. You can duplicate this at home by rolling up a towel or pillow case and placing it under your neck while your pillow supports your head.



Proper Side-lying Posture: Place a pillow support between your knees; add a second pillow support at the lumbar side and a third pillow to support your neck and head. The lumbar support pillow is needed only if there is a gap between the bed and your waist.



updated > 03.2020 | reviewed by > Lisa Cleveland, PT, Mayfield Clinic, Cincinnati, Ohio

Mayfield Certified Health Info materials are written and developed by the Mayfield Clinic. We comply with the HONcode standard for trustworthy health information. This information is not intended to replace the medical advice of your health care provider. © Mayfield Clinic 1998-2020.

Tips to Decrease Stress on the Spine in Daily Activities

General Restrictions:

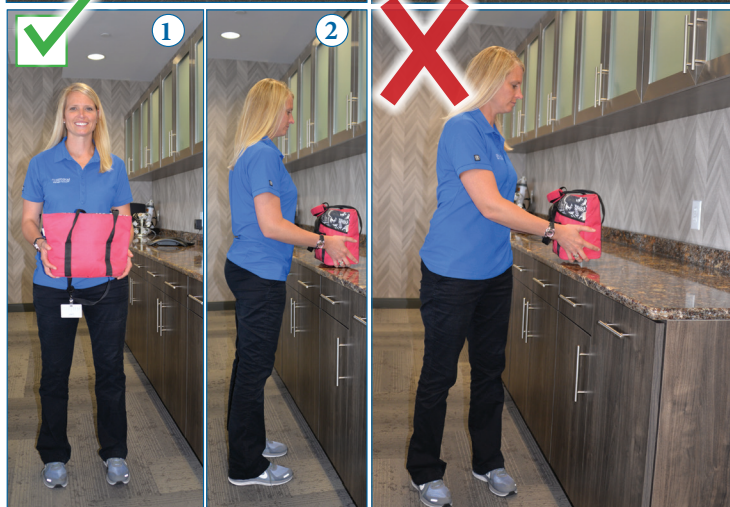
Avoid Bending / Lifting / Twisting (BLTs)

When Lifting is Allowed

- Bend at your knees and hips instead of at your back.
- Keep your chest and shoulders upright.
- Hold objects you are carrying close to your body.
- When moving an object from one location to another, move your feet and avoid twisting your spine.



Golfer's Lift This technique, above, is for the rare occasions when you absolutely must pick up an object from the floor. Note that the subject has positioned herself so that she can use her leg as a lever to pull her body back up to its standing posture while keeping her back straight.



Tips to Decrease Stress on the Spine in Daily Activities

Vacuuming / Mopping / Laundry

- Use the full length of a broom to sweep; do not hold the handle close to the floor.
- Try to keep your spine as straight as possible.
- Keep the vacuum close to your body.
- Do not bend at the waist when loading or unloading the washer.
- Squat or sit to load or unload a front-loading washer.
- Place the laundry basket on top of the washer/dryer.
- Do small loads.
- Try to work for small intervals of time with frequent breaks.



Exercises: Chiari Malformation



1

Hold onto a table or surface (gentle grip, not really firm), lean head down slightly. Hold for 20 seconds and repeat 3 times.



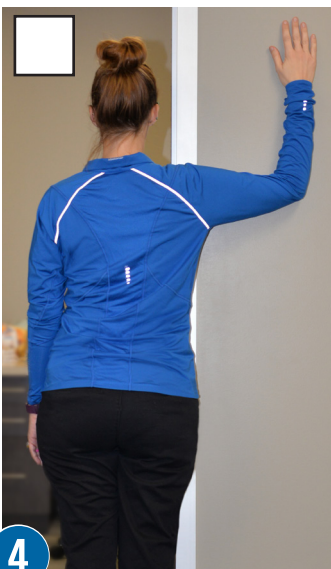
2

Hold onto a table or surface (gentle grip, not really firm), and slightly tuck chin, lean head away and rotate towards that side. Hold for 20 seconds and repeat 3 times.



3

Sit in a chair with your arms in an upright posture position. With your hands flat on the arms of the chair, push down such that you are attempting to lift your buttocks off the chair. Keep your chest upright and do not lean forward.



4

Place arm, including ball of shoulder against the wall, lean forward and hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times, both sides.



5

Sit or stand, tubing in both hands, elbows at sides, bent to 90°, palms up. Pinch shoulder blades together. Keep elbows at sides and do not let shoulder shrug up towards ears. Repeat 15 times.



Exercises: Chiari Malformation



1

Shoulder Abduction Raise both arms to shoulder level out to sides. Maintain good posture and keep abdominal muscles tight. Use light weights for a challenge. Repeat 20 times. Perform 2 times per day.



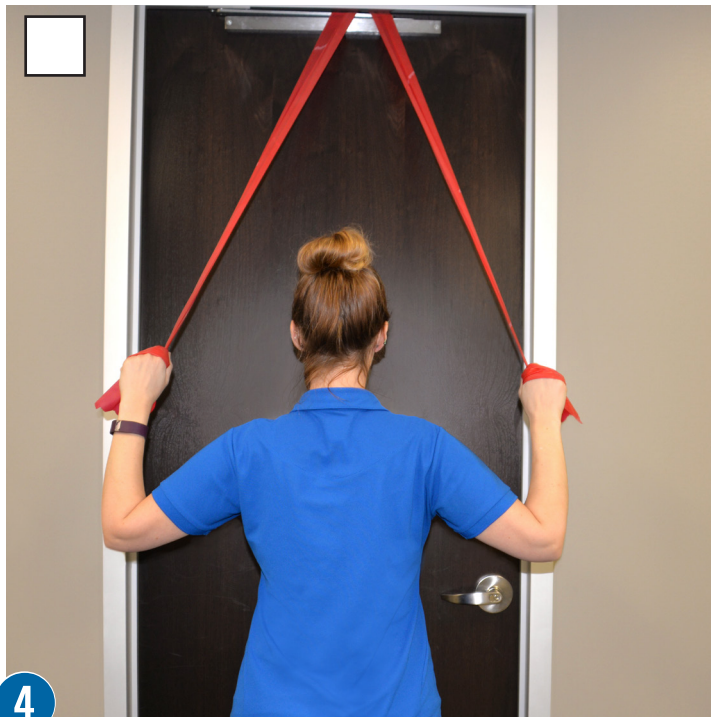
2

Bilateral Arm Raise Raise both arms to shoulder level in front. Maintain good posture and keep abdominal muscles tight. Use no more than 5 lbs. for a challenge. Repeat 20 times. Perform 2 times per day.



3

Rows Anchor band in door at chest level. Pull band back while pinching shoulder blades. Repeat 20 times. Perform 2 times per day.



4

Pulldowns Anchor band over top of door. Pull band down, bringing elbows to sides. Repeat 20 times. Perform 2 times per day.

