

It's HIP to be "SQUARE"

Being aware of HOW we use our body is not the easiest thing in the world. Our lives are busy, and we are constantly distracted. Our brains have been input with countless bits of information--some of them true, some of them wrong, and many of them incomplete!

We bend, reach, lift, stoop, twist, turn, stand, sit, lay, walk, and run, to name a few. Most of the time, we are improperly using our body...which, for some, can create discomfort, pain, and tension.

I find it remarkable that we, as former toddlers, had balance in our bodies. But, by the time we started school, most all of the balance we naturally had, disappeared. We have continued to live in our bodies with no instruction. And, most of what we've heard the "experts" tell us is without explanation!

The '**Health Tip (of the iceberg)**' that I would like to share with you will assist you in creating the absolute best biomechanical advantage in the way you use your body at work, at play, and in all of your activities of daily living.

When you do many of your activities of daily living, *slow down*, and ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do I take the time to *think* of my approach?
2. Do I make a *conscious* choice in that "quick moment" on how I'm going to move?
3. Am I reaching, bending, lifting, twisting, or sitting in a way that is *kind to my body*?
4. Do I pay attention to what my body "feels" like?
5. Do I *know* the best way to move?

Since this is a rather large subject, I am going to zero in on a single concept:



'BE SQUARE WITH YOUR WORK'

The Biomechanics of Daily Activities

Approach your task by having your 8 load-bearing joints aligned as much as possible. Maintain 90° angles at your joints whenever possible; this position will offer your body the best body mechanics relative to gravity.



It is also important to keep your work close to your body so you can use leverage to your benefit. If you can do that while avoiding twisting and over reaching in activities such as unloading groceries from the car, putting in/taking out toddlers in car seats, reaching in a high cupboard without a step-stool, moving wet laundry from the washer to the dryer, and sitting at your computer, your body will be in a much happier place!



Do NOT strain your body by using it in an inefficient way. Over time, it can become an aggravating hazard and may lead to a repetitive stress injury. Here's the rub: since no one really talks about the subject, it goes unnoticed. It's not in the awareness paradigm of our culture. However, I do believe that many of the aches and pains a person feels in his/her body stems from postural issues--unidentified and unappreciated as the root cause to so much discomfort!!!

If you can wrap your head around this one concept, you will be amazed at the result -- especially if you apply it to a frequent activity.

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