

Straighten Up America

Brought To You By: Branchville Family Chiropractic

The following pages outline a quick easy program you and your family can do in 5 minutes a day, which will enhance your health and make you look and feel better. The *Straighten Up America* program is designed to 1) Improve posture and function. 2) Stabilize core muscles. 3) Enhance spinal and neurological health and 4) Prevent spinal subluxations. This program was created by a coalition of Chiropractic colleges and organizations and was endorsed by then US Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson.

Important Note: Before beginning the “Straighten Up” program, check with your doctor of Chiropractic or other health care practitioner to make sure the exercises are appropriate for you and your specific needs. If you experience recurring, sharp or shooting pain, stop and report back to your doctor. You may need to modify the exercises.

Basic Rules:

- 1) Think positively. Enjoy the moment. This is serious fun.
- 2) Straighten up. Stand tall with a confident “inner winner” posture.
- 3) Breathe calmly, deeply and slowly from your stomach region.
- 4) Move smoothly. Do not jerk or bounce.

INNER WINNER POSTURE:

1. Straighten up. Stand tall with a confident “inner winner” posture (ears/shoulders/hips/knees/ankles in an approximately straight line).
2. Pull your belly button in toward your spine.



SPINE TUNING WARM-UPS

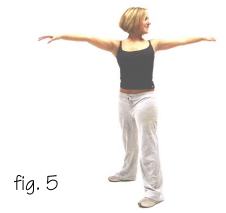
Tilting Star

1. In inner winner posture, with your arms out to the sides and feet spread in the star position, pull your belly button in toward your spine. (fig. 3)
2. Facing forward, place one hand in the air with the other at your side. Breathe in as you slowly stretch one arm overhead, while slowly bending your entire spine to the opposite side and sliding the other hand down your thigh for stability. (fig. 4)
3. Relax at the end of the stretch, breathing out and in again and then switch to the other side.
4. Perform the movement twice to each side. Easy does it. Enjoy the stretch.



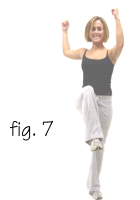
Twirling Star

1. Remain in the star position with belly button drawn inward. (fig 3)
2. Gently turn your head to look at one hand and slowly twist your entire spine to watch your hand as it goes behind you. Relaxing in this position breathe out and in. Repeat movement to the opposite side. (fig. 5)
3. Perform the movement slowly twice to each side. Enjoy the slow gentle stretch.



Twisting Star

1. Begin in the star position with your head held high and your belly button drawn in toward your spine. (fig. 3)
2. After raising your arms in “hands up” position, (fig. 6) bring your left elbow across your torso toward your right knee. Repeat the movement using your right elbow and left knee. (fig. 7)
3. Remain upright as you continue to alternate sides for 15 seconds. Breathe freely. Enjoy.
4. Individuals with balance disorders should use caution if attempting this exercise.



PURSUEING POSTURAL PERFECTION

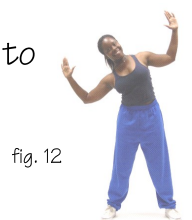
Trap Openers

1. Breathe deeply and calmly, relaxing your stomach region. Let your head hang loosely forward and gently roll from one side to the other.
2. Using your fingers, slowly massage the area just below the back of your head. Move down to the base of your neck.
3. Then relax your shoulders and slowly roll them backwards and forwards. Enjoy for 15 seconds.



The Eagle and the Hummingbird

1. In inner winner posture pull your belly button in toward your spine. To begin the Eagle bring your arms out to the sides and gently draw your shoulder blades together. Breathe in as you slowly raise your arms, touching your hands together above your head. Slowly lower your arms to your sides as you breathe out. Perform movement 3 times.
2. Next make small backward circles with your hands and arms, swaying from side to side in the “Hummingbird”. Enjoy for 10 seconds.



The Butterfly

1. Place your hands behind your head and gently draw your elbows backward. Slowly and gently press your head backward and resist with your hands for a count of two and release. Breathe freely. Perform 3 times. (fig. 13)

2. Gently massage the back of your neck and head as you relax your stomach region. With slow, easy breathing.



fig. 13

BALANCING THE CORE

The Tight Rope

1. Stand in the inner winner position with your head held high. Contract your stomach muscles to pull your belly button in toward your spine. (fig. 14)

2. Maintaining this posture, take a step forward as if on a tight rope. Make sure your knee is over your ankle and not over your toes. Allow the heel of your back foot to lift. Balance in this position for 20 seconds. Repeat on the opposite side. When finished shake your legs and feet to relax them. (fig. 15)

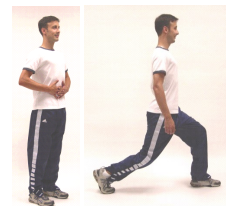


fig. 14

fig. 15

WRAPPING IT UP

Banging The Gong

1. Standing tall in inner winner posture with your feet wider than shoulders, pull your belly button in toward your spine. Then gently rotate your trunk from side to side. Easy does it. (fig. 16)

2. Let your arms flop loosely, as you shift your weight from knee to knee.

3. Swing gently from side to side. Breathe calmly and deeply. Enjoy the movement for 15 seconds. (fig. 17)



fig. 16

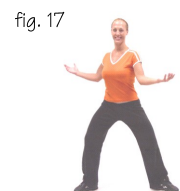


fig. 17

Extending The Sword

1. Stand in the star position, keeping your stance wide. Gently draw your belly button in toward your spine. (Fig. 3)

2. Turn your foot outward as you shift your weight to one side. Feel the groin area gently stretching. Place your knee over ankle and elbow behind knee as you extend your arm, torso and ribs. Easy does it. (fig. 18)

3. Older adults should place their hand on their knee. Stretch for 10 seconds on each side. (fig. 19).

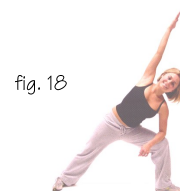


fig. 18



fig. 19

Shaking It Loose

Shake limbs loosely for 15 seconds. This one is pure fun.

We are done!



GETTING STARTED

1. "Straighten Up America" is intended to be incorporated in a healthy lifestyle of prudent active living. Consistent healthy choices and healthful habits form the bedrock of a healthy life. Our hope is that you make "Straighten Up" a daily part of a vibrant empowering lifestyle for the whole family.

2. This version of "Straighten Up" is designed for healthy children and adults to practice daily, like brushing your teeth.

3. Consult with your doctor of chiropractic or other health care provider before practicing this module, especially if you have spinal disabilities or other disorders which limit movement.

"STRAIGHTEN UP" LIFESTYLE CHOICES

1. Choose to improve. You are worth it. Maintain a positive perspective. Take small steps at first; set specific measurable health goals and achieve them. Celebrate your health successes; learn from temporary setbacks and move on. Choose to see life as an adventure. Keep learning for a lifetime.

2. Choose to enjoy healthy, invigorating activity at least 30 minutes daily when possible. Begin slowly, making gradual improvements. Keep an activity log or calendar. If you buy a pedometer, you can count and track your steps. Choosing active hobbies will add variety and spice to your life. Exercise for flexibility, balance, strength and endurance. Perform "Straighten Up" daily to improve your posture and strengthen your core muscles.

3. Choose to live tobacco free for your personal health and for your loved ones. Tobacco has detrimental effects on your nervous system and skeletal structures, as well as on your lungs and heart.

4. Choose healthy foods. Eat naturally. Enjoy whole grain breads and cereals. Choose several daily servings of fresh fruit and vegetables rich in antioxidants and phytonutrients. Calcium and magnesium rich foods help to build strong spinal columns. Avoid saturated and trans fats found in fast, fried foods. Instead eat more omega 3 fats from flax products and small ocean fish for healthy spinal joints. Choose high quality protein foods. Avoid refined sweets, such as sodas, cookies and candy. When supplementing your diet with vitamins and minerals, make quality choices. Try to eat in a relaxed atmosphere.

5. Choose good posture while sitting, standing or lifting. Hold your head high; keep your shoulders back. Lift by bending your legs with objects held close to your torso. This helps to prevent injury. Take frequent mini breaks. Segments of "Straighten Up" work well for this purpose. Change work positions often.

6. Choose a balanced supportive book bag/back pack for school, work or recreation. Carry less weight at one time. Use a bag with broad, padded straps securely positioned on both shoulders.

7. Choose a comfortable supportive mattress. For optimal spinal health sleep on your side or on your back, not face down. Plan for sufficient restful sleep.

8. Choose to be quiet. The stress of life impacts your health and your posture. Take time for relaxation and renewal. Practice thankfulness and positive thinking. Reflect, pray or meditate daily. Read uplifting writings.

9. Choose to serve others. Volunteerism and service enhance the quality of our lives and our relationships.

10. Choose to be kind to your spine. Regular spinal health check-ups, care and exercises help to ensure that your spine is balanced, aligned and well-adjusted. A healthy spine and nervous system are essential for good health.

This information provided by:

Branchville Family Chiropractic

Drs. Greg & Kim Stetzel, Chiropractors

10 Newton Ave * Branchville, NJ

(973)948-5556

www.bfchiro.info