

## Poor Posture Increases the Risk of Disability

Doctor,

This white paper discusses the significance of the May 2013 study published in the **Journal of Gerontology** titled *“Spinal Posture in the Sagittal Plane Is Associated with Future Dependence in Activities of Daily Living”*.

Recent headlines have compared abnormal posture to smoking, claiming that “sitting is the new smoking”. This reference refers to the negative consequences of poor posture and the lack of movement which accompanies sitting. Many adults are unaware of the relationship between abnormal spine and postural health, and its relationship with health outcomes. Yet statistics reveal over 60% of the workforce sit in front of a computer for their job. This is not a small concern. Spine and postural problems can lead to a host of current and future health challenges. A glimmer of hope amongst this big challenge is that most spine and postural problems can be avoided or reversed through awareness, self-care, and other physical interventions.

- This study gives a unique perspective proving a direct link between bad posture as an increased risk factor in developing a disability. (A disability is defined as being unable to perform one or more activities of daily living (ADL) because of illness or injury.)
- The authors non-invasively measured 4 spinal posture parameters (thoracic curve, lumbar curve, sacral-hip angle, and inclination) of 884 people (338 men and 466 women) from the ages 65-94 to determine if any postures were associated with the need for future assistance in ADL's.
- Posture was determined using an inclination angle between the vertical and a line joining C7 to the sacrum, also known as forward head posture and thoracic hyper-kypnosis.
- The authors took the first group, representing the best posture, and measured them against every other group.



The conclusion proved an increased risk in need for assistance with ADL's as posture deteriorated:

Group 1 versus Group 2: Group 2 had a **46%** higher risk of need for ADL assistance

Group 1 versus Group 3: Group 3 had a **290%** higher risk of need for ADL assistance

Group 1 versus Group 4: Group 4 had a **393%** higher risk of need for ADL assistance

Surveys consistently report that the ability to live independently on one's own terms rates as one of the most important characteristics of the aging population. One of the key aspects of health to achieve and maintain with age is quality and independence. Posture plays a significant role, in both women and men, in determining quality of life through older ages. Unfortunately, most medical physicians do not acknowledge nor address the importance or correction of posture. According to this study, as posture deviation increases, the risk of a disability climbs. The science behind this involves the relationship between the spine and central nervous system. The nervous system directs function of the entire body. And the health of the spine plays a significant role on the function of the nervous system. For this reason, Chiropractors help millions of people in all age categories achieve greater health and quality of life by preventing or reversing the negative effects of stress on posture.