

# Are you looking like a slouch for the Prom?

## We can help!

PHYSIOTHERAPY  
MASSAGE  
FITNESS  
738-8299



749 River Valley Drive  
humanperformancecentre.ca

*We are in prom season now and with it comes the prepping, priming and gown selection on the part of the gals.* A lot of time, effort and money can be given to this special event. The simplest and most cost effective preparation is to have good posture. Nothing can spoil the overall look of a beautifully gowned and coiffed prom queen than rounded shoulders and a poking head. One of the reasons for poor posture in female teens is that they tend to be taller than their male cohorts. Thus girls slouch their torsos and round their shoulders to make them feel closer in height to most males of their age group. A young girl with a well-endowed chest



*Patricia Sennett, Physiotherapist, BSc Physiotherapy, CAFCI*  
*If you have any questions or concerns for Trish, please contact her directly at [patricia.sennett@humanperformancecentre.ca](mailto:patricia.sennett@humanperformancecentre.ca).*

will round her shoulders forward to avoid appearing to look like Dolly Parton. Although these postural changes are meant to make one look less conspicuous, they actually attract attention for the wrong reasons.

More important than the esthetics of poor posture is the undue stress on ligaments and subsequent muscle imbalances. Poor posture causes a chain reaction of events. Once the shoulders are rounded the head pokes forward causing an increase in the natural curve of the mid-back and decrease in the natural curve of the low back. Although initially only a problem esthetically, prolonged adoption of this posture will cause sustained strain of the ligaments around the spine and lengthening of some muscles. The lengthened muscles tend to become weak while other muscles shorten, causing them

to have an ineffective pull to help you move or sit or stand for long periods. This can lead to back pain.

The fix is easy and you can start now and be ready for the prom and avoid a potential future of back pain. Stand in front of a mirror or ask someone to tell you what your posture looks like from the side. You may notice that your shoulders are rounded. By simply tucking your chin in and keeping your eyes looking on the horizontal your shoulder posture will start to correct. Then with a little more focus, pull those shoulders back a bit more. This will automatically correct your spinal curves. Feel awkward? It takes frequent periods of mental correction and repetition for correct posture to feel more natural.

Muscles can be strengthened when simply sitting in a chair. Sit on the front half of a chair and let your posture slouch a bit. Then correct the slouch, tuck your chin in and pull your shoulders back. Hold this for 5 seconds. Then slowly lower into the slouch. Try this 10X. The more often you do this through the day, the more you train your brain and muscles to hold the good posture when you aren't thinking about it, such as when you are walking the red carpet at prom or having your first job interview. Good posture exudes confidence and is good for your health. Congratulations to all graduates, male and female, and yes fellas, this exercise is good for you too.



**Human  
Performance  
Centre**

Achieve Your Best  
... We Can Help.