



Sleeping Posture

Since the average person spends about a third of his/her life sleeping, bed posture is as important as standing or sitting posture. Your sleeping position, bed, and use of pillows, all determine your bed posture.

IS YOUR SLEEP SATISFACTORY?

How your back, neck, and joints fare over eight hours of work can be influenced by how they spent eight hours in bed. The standard, no-pain position to shoot for is "on your side, knees bent, pillow between the knees, and your head resting on a single pillow," or on your back with one pillow under your knees and one under your head. You might need to leave out an element or two from that ideal if you've got a hard-set sleeping habit, but it's worth considering a switch-up.

SLEEPING POSITION:

- Pressure on the back varies with sleeping position. Sleeping on the back produces the least amount of pressure, followed by sleeping on your side. Stomach sleeping is the most stressful sleeping position. Sleep on your back or side rather than your stomach whenever possible.
- Use pillows under your neck and knees if you sleep on your back.
- Side sleepers should use pillows between their ear and the bed and between their knees to maintain spine alignment. Your top leg should be even with, or slightly behind your bottom leg, with both knees bent.
- Use a small pillow to keep your head in a neutral or aligned position when sleeping on your stomach.

BED DESIGN:

- Select a mattress firm enough to provide good back support and alignment. Stomach sleepers require firmer mattresses than back or side sleepers.
- Mattresses with convoluted foam usually provide sufficient support and comfort. This design has an egg-carton appearance and feels soft but resilient to touch.
- Avoid basing selection on coil count and design. Coils have minimal effect on quality or durability of mattresses.

- Try out mattresses for personal comfort before purchasing. Specialty memory foams and custom options are not always the most comfortable choice.
- Mattresses have a life span of 8-10 years and should be replaced as they wear out.

NECK PILLOW SELECTION:

- Consider the depth of your neck curve, your preferred sleeping position, and the firmness of your mattress when selecting a pillow.
- Select a pillow that supports your head and fills in your neck curve.
 - Back sleepers - the pillow should fill in the space between your neck and the bed. If you can see your feet, your pillow is probably too big.
 - Side sleepers - the pillow should fill in the space between the ear and bed. Select a thicker pillow than the one used by back sleepers.
 - Stomach sleepers - use a small pillow to level your head when sleeping. The firmness of the mattress will affect the thickness of the pillow. Soft mattresses allow you to sink into the mattress when sleeping. Use a pillow thick enough to fill in the space between your head and mattress.
- If your pillow is too high, replace or modify it. You can trim foam or remove padding to make it thinner.
- If your pillow is too low, add foam, fills or folded towels to increase the thickness.
- Mattress pads can affect the size and thickness of your pillow. Choose a pad, if you want one, before you select or size a pillow.

Source: <https://ergonomics.ucla.edu/component/content/article/92-back-safety/120-sleeping-posture>

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