

BRUGGER'S POSTURAL RELIEF EXERCISE

RESTORING MUSCLE BALANCE - BRUGGER'S POSTURAL RELIEF POSITION

While the goal of neurodevelopment of the locomotor system is to achieve the upright posture, Brugger and Janda have shown how deleterious sedentarism is. Brugger describes the typical sedentary posture of man via a linkage system. He has shown how approximation of the sternum and symphysis increases both end-range joint loading and muscular tension (see Figure 1). It is possible, however, to demonstrate that postural correction can immediately improve joint function (by centrating joints) and reduce muscle tone.

Figure 1: Slumped posture contributing to sternosymphyseal syndrome.



Figure 1

Figure 2: Brugger's postural relief position.



Figure 2

Brugger's postural relief position facilitates muscles, which promotes dynamic stability and reciprocally inhibits muscles, which shorten due to postural stress (see Figure 2). Check tension in the upper trapezius in the slumped posture and then in the postural relief position. Muscle tension should be dramatically reduced in the postural relief position. Another check is to have your patient perform cervical rotation in the slump and corrected postures. Again, a dramatic improvement in the postural relief position should be observed.

BRUGGER'S POSTURAL RELIEF EXERCISE

- Sit at the edge of a chair.
- Abduct legs slightly.
- Externally rotate legs slightly.
- Rest weight on legs/feet & relax abdominal muscles.
- Tilt pelvis forward & lift sternum up thus increase lumbar lordosis to its maximum.
- Supinate forearms.
- Externally rotate arms.

This postural advice can be recommended for 10 seconds every 20 minutes. It can be incorporated into sit to stand, walking, and lifting advice. Within a few weeks, patients usually experience the sensation of sitting and standing straighter naturally. When this occurs, conscious effort is not as necessary because a new skill has been learned on an automatic basis. This is ideal as long-term compliance with exercise is difficult to achieve, but a new postural habit once learned is unlikely to be broken.