

## Golfing & Chiropractic

I know this is Apex and not Pinehurst, which is the Mecca of golf in the South East, yet read on. I hope to bring home a point on something that is important to all of us, proper posture.

What does golf and chiropractic have in common? A better question, that a lot of golfers know to be very important is, what does golfing and proper form/posture have in common? The answer can make a large difference in ones game and life.

In the simplistic sense of it golfing is a matter of levers, and moving those levers in the smoothest and most solid motion, gets the longest drive. These levers are all housed within the framework of our body. To bring about the power needed to move the ball, the desired distance the force begins down at our very foundation, our ankles. That force travels next to the knee, up to the hip (that is an important joint often overlooked in golfing, I'll touch on that later) right up the 26 moveable segments comprising the spine. The spine has 71 articulations which transfers the force to the shoulders, down the arm, and out to the end of the club head. With all those body parts/levers and joints it's no wonder a good golfer can drive a ball the length of 3 football fields.

Back to the chiropractic part. Would you believe the above process, swinging a golf club, involves not less than 83 joints (a lot more if I included the bones in the wrist and ankles). The proper position of those levers with their articulations determines how far and straight the ball will travel. Now if one, or a number of those articulations, is not quite gliding in the joint that well, then you will have some resistance, and dysfunction of the joint.

I recently read in "Chiropractic Wellness And Fitness Magazine" a special feature article on Golf Fitness. The author points out how important the proper posture is. There are three areas that stand out as ones often overlooked when stepping up to the ball. First, bend from the hip, not the low back. If you bend from the low back your back will be arched, jamming the joints, and your arms will swing in closer to your body creating a hindrance that can be easily avoided. The correct way to bend is pivot where your leg comes into the hip. You can check for this by placing your hand over the socket where the leg meets the hip and when you bend this joint you should feel your hand slide over your pants. Second flex at the knees, just a little bit between 2-4 inches. And finally do the shoulder drop. Unless your shoulder were to come out of its socket the only way to accomplish this is to tilt your spine. This needs to be done toward the right (assuming you are a right-handed player). Tilt your spine ten degrees or about two inches letting your shoulder be farther down to make for a smoother hand placement. I won't even touch on the wind up or swing, just pointing out the importance of a good foundation to start with.

The point of this article is to show the readers how important their posture is. From driving a golf ball to driving a car posture does play an important role in how we function and feel about ourselves. For I think we all know how we feel after we made an extended

trip, where we didn't take enough stops to get out and stretch our backs we feel them "speaking" to us. We need to listen to our bodies and not just fool our brains by taking painkillers that make us feel "ok"? A saying I like is that a good tooth doesn't hurt does it. If you don't listen to your body who will?

**Case of the week:** This patient is a male who presented himself to my office with the complaint of ankle pain. The history revealed he was a long distance runner for a number of years, long distance like over 26 miles at a clip! It seems he had run at least 8 marathons in his earlier days. Coming into our clinic he couldn't even walk with his weight correctly distributed over his foot. Running was out of the question for him due to the pain. After a few weeks of care we already have him walking correctly, with the hope of having him running again before the end of spring. Proper posture is very important, even in our ankles.

Any questions please call our office 303-2213.  
Dr. Patrick Gallagher  
Chiropractor