

Posture Tips for Mom

A Physical Therapist's
Perspective



American Physical Therapy Association
The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.™



Lifting and carrying a child, picking up toys off of the floor, and pushing a stroller are normal daily tasks for mothers. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) offers these tips to help moms and other caregivers accomplish these daily feats without aches and pains.

Physical therapists are experts in movement and function, especially when movement involves a change in “normal” patterns of movement. Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants who are members of the American Physical Therapy Association are bound by the Association’s *Code of Ethics* and are committed to providing competent and compassionate care. Please be aware that even if your state requires a physician’s referral before you can see a physical therapist, you always have the right to see the physical therapist of your choice.

To learn more about how physical therapists help with other areas of women’s health, please visit us at www.apta.org.

This brochure is not intended as a substitute for professional health care.

Lifting Your Child From the Floor

When picking your child up off the floor, you should use a half-kneel lift. First, stand close to your child on the floor. While keeping your back straight, place one foot slightly forward of the other foot, and bend your hips and knees to lower yourself onto one knee. Once down on the floor, grasp your child with both arms and hold him or her close to your body. Tighten your stomach muscles, push with your legs, and slowly return to the standing position. To place your child onto the floor, the same half-kneel technique should be performed.



Carrying/Holding Your Child

When holding or carrying your child, you should always hold him or her close to your body and balanced in the center of your body. Avoid holding your child in one arm and balanced on your hip. When using a child carrier, be sure to keep your back straight and your shoulders back to avoid straining your back and neck.



Picking up Toys From the Floor

As a mother, you will find yourself cleaning up after your child often. When picking toys up from the floor, keep your head and back straight, and while bending at your waist, extend one leg off the floor straight behind you.



Lifting Your Child Out of the Crib

If your child's crib has a rail that lowers, you will want it in the lowest position when lifting your child out of the crib. As you lift, keep your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent. Arch your low back and, while keeping your head up, bend at your hips. With both arms, grasp your child and hold him or her close to your chest. Straighten your hips so you are in an upright position, and then extend your knees to return to a full stand. To return your child to the crib, use the same technique and always remember to keep your child close to your chest.



Pushing a Stroller

When pushing your child in a stroller, you will want to stay as close to the stroller as possible, allowing your back to remain straight and your shoulders back. The force to push the stroller should come from your entire body, not just your arms. Avoid pushing the stroller too far ahead of you because this will cause you to hunch your back and shoulders forward.



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