

POSTURAL AND RESPIRATORY MODULATION OF AUTONOMIC FUNCTION, PAIN, AND HEALTH

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Despite considerable evidence that posture affects Physiology and function, the significant influence of posture on health is not addressed by most physicians. In fact, neither comprehensive postural nor structural evaluation is a routine part of training in physical diagnosis, and most osteopathic physicians do not describe postural/spinal mechanics in their usual patient evaluations.

Observation of the striking influence of postural mechanics on function and symptomatology have led to our hypothesis that posture affects and moderates every physiologic function from breathing to hormonal production. Spinal pain, headache, mood, blood pressure, pulse, and lung capacity are among the functions most easily influenced by posture. The most significant influences of posture are upon respiration, oxygenation, and sympathetic function. Ultimately, it appears that homeostasis and autonomic regulation are intimately connected with posture. The corollary of these observations is that many symptoms, including pain, may be Moderated or eliminated by improved posture.