

8 Steps to a Pain-Free Back: Natural Posture Solutions for pain in the back, neck, shoulder, hip, knee, and foot

ESTHER GOKHALE, Pendo Press,
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Intelligent and beautifully illustrated, 8 Steps to a Pain-Free Back shows readers how to overcome back pain through better posture. Gokhale's revolutionary approach features a highly original blend of user-friendly instructions, physiological expertise, and in-depth historical analysis. Users will not only experience pain-relief; they will also understand why they feel so much better. The potential applications of this book are enormous. Because the Gokhale Method is a holistic program for returning the body to its natural posture, her system reaches out beyond the epidemic of back pain to address dozens of other musculoskeletal maladies including repetitive stress injuries and pain of the neck, foot, knee, shoulders, and hip.

The book guides the reader through a series of disarmingly simple changes in posture. Lessons on sitting, walking, sleeping, and bending involve an anteverted pelvis and use the muscles to decompress the spine, support motion, protect the joints and bones, reduce stress, and improve circulation. The relief comes right away. Unlike most back-pain books, this one does not require any special equipment, physical exercises, expertise in Yoga or Pilates, or changes in diet or daily routine. Instead, the steps are designed to

integrate easily into everyday life. One can perform them while driving, sitting in a meeting, standing in line, or bending over to pick up an object.

Gokhale sets the stage by asking why the epidemic of back pain has been largely confined to adults living in Europe and North America during the twentieth century. Using history and anthropology, she leads her readers through a series of key factors that have led to unhealthy posture, culminating in the 1920s fashion that encouraged a tucked pelvis and habitual slouching. To show how far we have veered from the ideal, she includes and analyzes over a thousand photographs of young children, of pre-industrial artworks, and of men and women from Africa, Asia, South America, and rural Europe who have not forgotten how to use their bodies. These images, along with many anatomical drawings, provide convincing evidence of the author's fundamental claim that a return to the body's natural posture offers the only permanent way out of back pain.

8 Steps to a Pain-Free Back will appeal to an enormous readership, including those who deal with back pain in their daily practices: neurologists, physical therapists, physiatrists, general practitioners, and yoga and dance instructors. Above all, it should prove invaluable to people in pain—professional and weekend athletes, frequent flyers, computer users, construction workers, gardeners, and anyone who has an aching back. Their numbers are legion.