

## To strengthen your middle back reach for a 'Human Spear'!

The mid-back muscles that attach between your shoulder blades play an important dual role: they stabilize your shoulders whenever you use your arms while also preventing slouching by lengthening and extending your middle and upper back.

Ideally those flat muscles help draw the shoulder blades slightly downwards so that each shoulder blade (scapula) rests snugly and flat against the ribcage while your spine stays long and straight.

The mid-back muscles are prone to weakness. You can see that in people who have rounded shoulders and a flaring out of their shoulder blades. When you see those thin flat bones stick out from the person's rib cage like chicken wings it means that the support muscles aren't able to do their job properly; usually they are either too weak or too relaxed.

The 'Human Spear' is a useful exercise routine you can do to keep those important muscles strong and alert. Simply follow these steps:

- Lie face down on the floor or a firm surface.
- Lie straight, tuck in your chin & with arms by your side.
- Now lengthen your spine by drawing your arms down towards your feet.
- Focus on keeping your chin tucked in and feel for a tightening sensation in the muscles between your shoulder blades. Imagine your body is like a spear where your head is the point and your arms become the cutting edges.
- Breathe slowly while holding the 'spear position' for 20 seconds.
- Complete a set of three and repeat twice daily.



This is a deceptive exercise so take it slowly and gently. As you get stronger you can gradually increase the holding time and the number of repetitions.

As an exercise it's an ideal companion to using the **Posturepole**. Doing the 'Human Spear' may help improve the strength and endurance of these important postural muscles while using the **Posturepole** may ease tension in the neck, middle back and shoulders and improve your sense of postural alignment.