

Lordosis

A lordosis is a completely normal backward curve in the lower back and the neck. A hyperlordosis is an exaggerated curve. The lower part of the back will curve inward far more than what it should do naturally. The spine requires a natural curve for it to function properly. This is due largely in part to the shape of the individual spinal bones. If the curve ends up becoming too great, the stress placed upon the other parts of the spinal column will cause pain.

Some of the muscles surrounding the spine and the hip will become tight, while some will become stretched and weak, which causes an imbalance. Often times, this is referred to as lower crossed syndrome due to the positioning of the weak and tight muscles. If you were to draw a line from the tight hip flexors to the tight lower back and another one from the weak hamstrings and the weak abdominals, which forms a cross shape.

There Are a Number of Other Causes of an Increased Lordosis:

- Hereditary: sometimes they run in families, with mother and daughter often exhibiting common signs.
- Genetic: certain population groups have an increased lordosis, including some from Afro-Caribbean countries.
- Pregnancy: the increased weight at the front can pull the spine into an extended (lordotic) position.
- Excessive extending exercises and sports – some dance or gymnastic related sports may require a lot of extension through the spine which can increase the lordosis.

Lordosis Anatomy

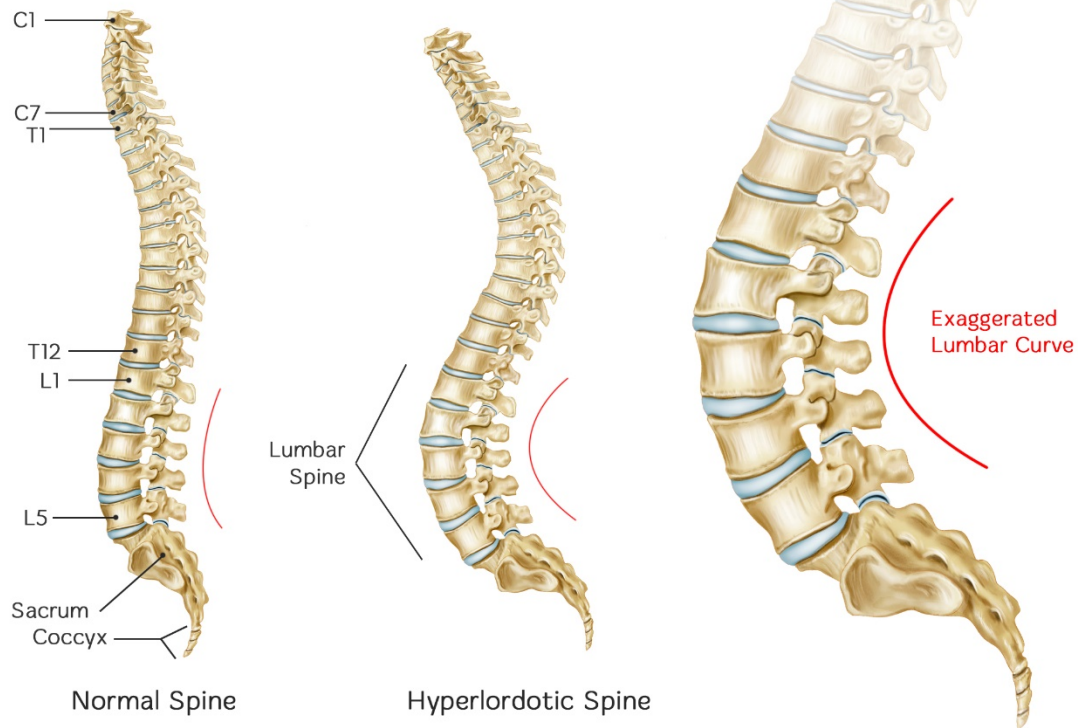
The spine has a natural inward curvature known as a lordosis located in the lower back and the neck. In the lower back, this curve should be 30-35 degrees. So it is important to know that a normal spine has a lordosis in the lower back, and in the neck. But when this lordosis is exaggerated, it might be known as an “increased lordosis” or a hyperlordosis.

An increased lordosis can place stress on the posterior (back) structures of the spine, such as the facet joints. These joints may be more prone to inflammation and eventually arthritis (known as spondylarthrosis). This can cause a lot of pain in the lower back.

An increased lordosis can also lead to a spinal deformity known as a spondylolisthesis (this is where one vertebra slips forwards compared to the vertebra above) and this can cause a lot of instability in the spine.



Lordosis



An MRI scan showing an increased Lordosis of the lumbar spine

How to Treat a Lordosis:

1. Pilates/Yoga

Pilates and yoga can be very effective at normalizing spinal posture, and improving spinal stability and flexibility.

2. Physical Therapy

By undergoing a physical therapy regimen, you can help to build strength in the core muscles. It's very important to undertake a home exercise program, and your therapist will advise what this is. It can take months to over a year to slightly flatten an increased lordosis.

3. Weight Loss

When you have an added amount of weight, it places an undue amount of strain and pressure on the back. By losing excess weight, you can help to relieve the extra strain and get everything on the right track for your health and well-being.



Tips:

- Since the spine is a key component for the flexibility and movement of the body, it is crucial that you do everything you can to maintain a healthy spine.
- Maintaining proper posture is important to having a healthy spine and back.
- If you have extra weight, you need to try doing whatever you can to get back to a normal, healthy weight.
- Medication is not generally recommended by therapists even though your doctor may ask you to take painkillers or anti-inflammatories. The reason it is not recommended is that an increased lordosis is a deformity/dysfunction rather than a disease, and often far better treated naturally.