

Vertical Axis Horizontal Axis and Body Balance

The well aligned body structure is essential for blood circulation and energy circulation throughout the body. Musculoskeletal disorders such as shoulder and back pain could be due to alignment issue, and many internal organ disorders such as menstrual pain, poor digestion, and shortness of breath, etc could be caused by muscle bone malalignment too. We can analyze the body with two axis - the vertical and horizontal axis and adjust them to restore balance.

The vertical axis of the body has three key parts: foot arches, pelvis and rib cage. The vertical axis starts from the foot arches to go up the legs, through the pelvis and ribs to end at the thoracic vertebrae. The position of the lumbar vertebrae depends on the condition of the pelvis, and the position of the thoracic vertebrae depends on the condition of both the pelvis and the ribs.

When the vertical axis is good, there is no bony edge on the top of the foot, the Achilles tendon is centered, the muscles in the calf are smooth without tense edges, the pelvis is even on both sides, every thoracic vertebrae should be able to move when bending the back, and when lifting head the 7th cervical vertebrae (the lowest cervical vertebra above the shoulder) should be able to move forward slightly.

The horizontal axis is from the fingers arms and shoulders to 1st – 5th or 6th ribs as well as the thoracic vertebrae. The 1st to 6th ribs and thoracic vertebrae are where the vertical and horizontal vertebrae meet.

When the horizontal axis is good, the bones of the arm and hands align well at the wrist joints, the muscles in the inner side of the forearm are smooth without edges. The cubital fossa face forward when the two arms form a line at shoulder height with palm facing forward. Shoulder blades lie flat on ribs. Ribs are smooth without sticking out.

The foot arches are the foundations of the whole body. The foot has three arches: two longitudinal (medial and lateral) arches and one anterior transverse arch. They are formed by the tarsal and metatarsal bones, and supported by ligaments and tendons in the foot. Their shape allows them to act in the same way as a spring, bearing the weight of the body and absorbing the shock produced during locomotion.

If the foot arches are not good, the line of force up from the feet will not be straight, and the pelvis will not be able to even and symmetrical. Therefore adjusting the foot arches is the start of restoring the vertical axis.

The start of restoring the horizontal axis goes with aligning the hands and wrist joints, adjusting the ulnar and radius bones of the forearms, and making the muscular edge in the forearms disappear.

Some helpful exercises to adjust the axis are listed below:

1. Train the muscles beside the spine to make the two sides of the body evenly receive force
First stand with two feet shoulder width apart with toes pointing forward. Two feet stay parallel as two supporting pillars. The next movements will help to reorganize the structure of the body around these parallel pillars.
After stand there being stable, hang the head down naturally to its limit. Keep the neck bent without

lifting the chin. Then bend the thoracic vertebrae one then the other to open the space between them, move on to bend the lumbar vertebrae. Stop when reaching the limit. During the movement only control the neck slightly, relax and do not force any other parts. When you can not bend anymore, stop and do not force more, otherwise it causes the fascia around the muscles slide inappropriately.

After reaching the limit, bend the knees slightly, move the buttocks slightly forward, then straighten the knees. Afterwards straighten the body, start from lower lumbar vertebrae one then the other to have the vertebrae move back in. Keep the head down and neck bent during this until the middle thoracic vertebrae move forward, then relax the neck. After upper thoracic vertebrae move forward lift the head.

This way the spine is opened up one vertebra then the other, then is closed one vertebrae then the other. Head go down first, stay still in between, and is lifted at the very end. Keep two arms naturally lowered. Do not control the breath, otherwise the ribs are controlled and affect the thoracic vertebrae. The spinal muscles stay relaxed, so that they can follow the force of line through the vertical axis to move back inside the fascia and be realigned.

2. Adjust the end of the horizontal axis

Use right thumb and index finger to hold the end of left thumb, gently and slowly shake it to loosen the muscles and fascia along the thumb for 10-20 seconds, then shake the index finger, middle finger, ring finger and little finger the same way. Switch to the other hand and work on the five fingers one by one.

3. Adjust the end of the vertical axis

Soak feet in warm or hot water for 5 minutes, then shake and loosen the toes one by one, and massage the arch areas at the bottom of the feet for 5 minutes.