

THE CONSTRUCTIVE REST POSITION

Description of Position

Lie on the back on the floor (not a bed) with the knees bent and the feet resting as close to the pelvis as is comfortable. Just above the knees tie them together in an upright position. Place a small pillow under the head, or one of greater size if you are deep-chested. Place a roll of rug books, or some kind of lift under the balls of the feet, not the entire foot. Rest the arms across the chest (do not fold them.) If the arms have to be held to keep them on the chest, allow the elbows to slide to the floor, leaving the lower arm resting on the front of the body.

Reasons for the Constructive Rest Position (CRP)

The base of support is broad; the center of gravity of the body is close to the supporting surface. The skeleton itself, without muscular aid, can approximate mechanical balance in this position. Hence little muscular effort is needed to maintain the position and patterns of muscle tightness can most easily be changed through imagined action.

The knees are tied together because habitual tightness of muscles on the outside of the thighs and across the back of the pelvis tends to pull the knees apart. The tie substitutes for muscle work which would otherwise be essential to maintain the upright position of the knees.

The lift is placed under the balls of the feet to overcome the tendency of habitually tight muscles on the front of the thighs to straighten the knees and thus move the feet away from the pelvis. The lift substitutes for work in the hamstrings which would be essential otherwise to maintain the position of the feet.

The arms are placed across the chest because the shoulder girdle has its only bony attachment (sternoclavicular joints) on the front of the trunk, at the top of the breast bone. If the arms tend to slide off the chest (and they will with many people) this is due to tightness of muscles on the back between the shoulder blades and the spine. The arms may be held in place by a loop of cloth placed just above the elbows. The loop should be small enough to hold the elbow in line with the hip joint on the same side.

The pillow is placed under the head (not the neck) to discourage tightness of muscles at the base of the skull.

Comfort and Rest. The ability to rest in CRP increases with its use. The pull of gravity itself can do a great deal to discourage muscle tensions, especially if you allow the floor to support you. Make yourself as comfortable as possible in the prescribed position. Do not try to change your body into alignment you think might be right, and above all, do not at any time force your low back to touch the supporting surface. Rest and concentrate on imagined action. If you become uncomfortable move as needed for greater comfort but return to CRP.

To get up from CRP

Roll over on either side, come to the four-legged position and get up slowly, using hands and arms as needed. Never, never raise the trunk to the upright position without first rolling over on the side.