

# The Courtyard Clinic

Physical  
Health

## Breast Size and Back Pain



### Osteopathy/Physiotherapy Sports & Remedial Massage

- Back, Neck & Shoulder pain
- Joint & Muscle Injuries
- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Rib Pain
- Sports Injuries

### Podiatry/Chiropody

- Toenail Problems
- Corns & Callouses
- Verrucae
- Diabetic Foot Checks
- Foot Odour
- Footwear Advice



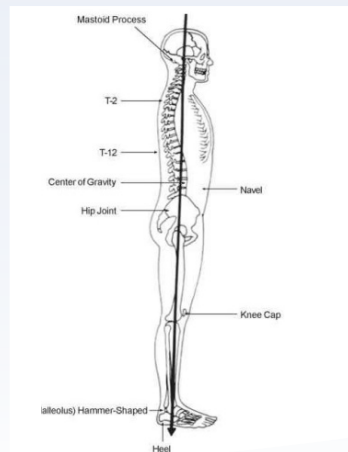
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When it comes to back pain most people will think of the common causes such as injury and accidents, physical work, too active or sedentary a lifestyle, wear and tear. These are the things that can cause back pain in anyone. However, there is a common issue that can cause back pain which is specific to women, and that is breast size. Large breasts can lead to postural problems and issues throughout the body including neck and back pain, headaches, rib irritation and shoulder problems to name but a few. This month, The Courtyard Clinic has teamed up with The Bra Consultancy to explain how a larger bust can cause musculoskeletal issues, and what you can do about it.

### CENTRE OF GRAVITY (COG)

There is something in physics known as a centre of gravity (CoG). Basically, this is the point around which an object is balanced, like the middle of a level see-saw when it's at rest. The way that the structure of our body is organised



means that weight-bearing and balance is easiest (requiring the least effort and causing the least strain) when we are in a "normal" upright posture. I've put normal in "....." because there really isn't such a thing. As soon as we're born our body must cope with the various trials and tribulations of life and start to adapt and change. Imagine a level seesaw when someone sits on one side, to make that level again someone of a similar weight would have to sit in the same spot on the opposite side, or closer to the middle if they were heavier/further away if they were lighter.

Our body does this automatically. For example, if you pick up a bag in one hand, you lean a little the other way to distribute the load equally around the centre of gravity so you can stay upright.

### HOW A LARGER BUST EFFECTS THE COG

The larger the bust, the more weight is placed in front of your CoG. In order to stay upright this has to be balanced somehow. Our body does this by automatically adjusting posture to compensate. There are many different patterns of compensation used to achieve this in the body which put added strain on the joints in the spine, ribs, shoulders and pelvis. It also requires a lot of extra muscular effort and tension to provide stability and support, which can lead to pain, stiffness and reduced range of motion. The change in position and muscular tension in the neck can also lead to chronic headaches and migraines. Changes in shape to the thoracic cavity (rib cage) can alter breathing mechanics and lead to shortness of breath and difficulty with exercising. Altered position of the collar bone and upper ribs can cause nerve compression leading to pain, numbness and pins & needles in the arms and hands.

### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

It is seldom the case that one factor can be the single cause of a person's pain. A larger bust might be contributing significantly

but there could be other parts to the equation too. Sitting too long, lack of regular exercise and poor core strength can play a big part. At The Courtyard Clinic we give you advice on the best types of exercise to improve core strength and help postural mechanics. We also treat irritated joints, strained muscles and compressed nerves. However, there is an important step to help musculoskeletal pain from larger busts that we cannot help with, and that is where our friends at The Bra Consultancy come in.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF A CORRECTLY FITTING BRA

Did you know that 8 out of 10 women wear the wrong size bra? Symptoms of an ill-fitting bra are:

- Shoulder straps digging in.
- Bra riding up the back.
- Breasts over-spilling the cups.

At The Bra Consultancy the most common issue we see is that the back band isn't firm enough. The back band should be allowing the torso to carry 80% of the bust weight. When this isn't firm enough the bust isn't well supported and so women tend to tighten their shoulder straps to try and pull the bust upwards. This creates pressure points on the shoulders which leave indentations (sometimes permanently) and alters the postural mechanics of the neck, shoulders and upper back. A properly fitted bra can make the world of difference to your postural health, comfort and ability to exercise.

Take a look at our handy guide ([www.thebraconsultancy.com/bra-size-guide](http://www.thebraconsultancy.com/bra-size-guide)) which demonstrates examples of well-fitting and ill-fitting bras. If your bra looks like those in the ill-fitting column it might be time to come in for a refit.

Pop in and see us at The Bra Consultancy: 16 Edwards Walk, Maldon, Essex CM9 5PS. Or you can get in touch by emailing: [info@thebraconsultancy.co.uk](mailto:info@thebraconsultancy.co.uk) or calling: 07507741025 / 07790270503.

## The Courtyard Clinic - Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy, Podiatry/Chiropody



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Osteopath



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