

Preventing the Back From Twisting While Sleeping on Your Side

Because humans have a high shoulder blocking access to the neck, the trunk must be elevated with a pillow in order to allow the shaped neck support pillow access to the key site. The lower arm goes behind the back. But as a result of elevating the trunk, the upper torso tends to lean forwards.

Typically, however, the hips are vertical with respect to the bed, and thus the spine must twist from the vertical position at the hips, to the leaning forward position at the shoulders.

The problem is resolved by elevating the hips (not including the legs) above the surface of the bed so that the hips lean forwards from the vertical at the same angle as the shoulders. The spine is no longer twisted.

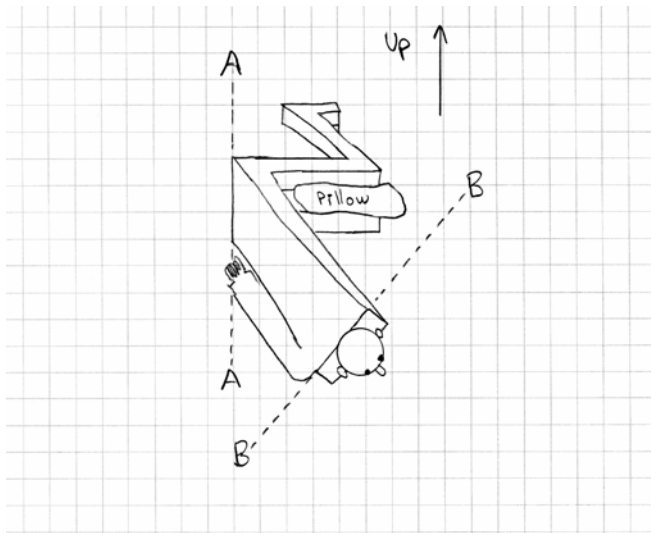


Figure 1: Upper torso leans forward (B-B) but hips are vertical (A-A), so spine twists. (Upper arm, upper torso pillow, and neck support pillow not shown)

This effect is exaggerated on a soft bed where the hips sink into the bed and the legs do not. In this case, the hips are actually leaning backwards from the vertical and the twisting of the spine is even worse.

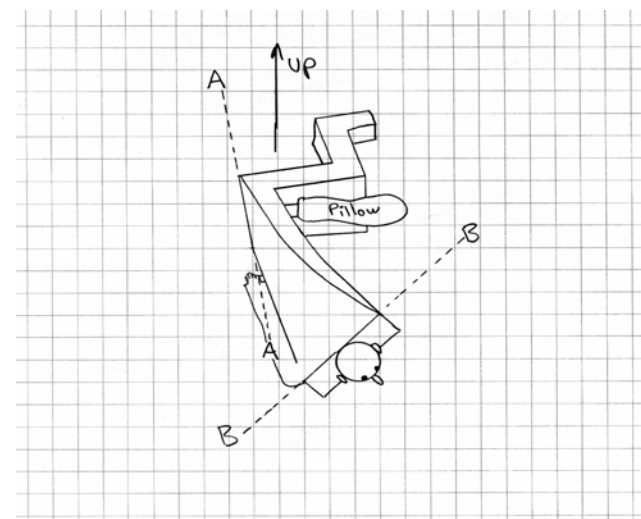


Figure 2: Hips sink into soft bed and lean backwards (A-A). Spine must twist even more. (Upper arm, upper torso pillow, and neck support pillow not shown)

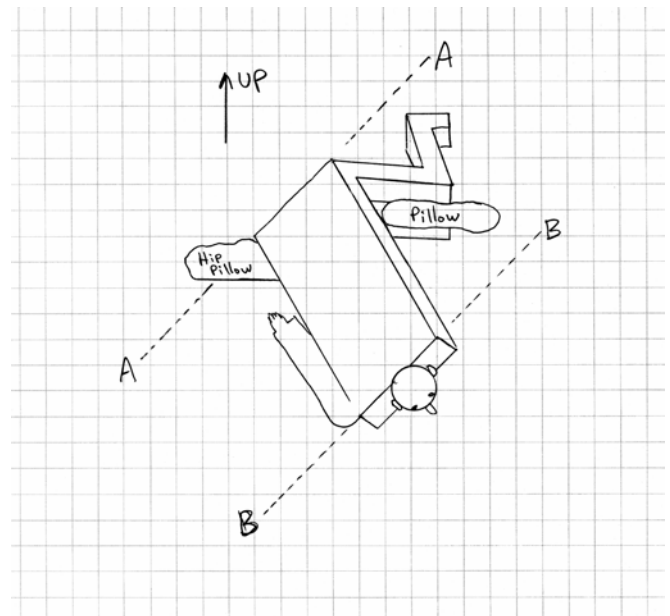


Figure 3: Pillow under hips ensure that hips lean forward at same angle as shoulders. Spine is not twisted since line A-A is parallel to B-B. (Upper arm, upper torso pillow, and neck support pillow not shown)

Since it is very difficult to gauge the alignment of your own spine when lying in this position, it is recommended that another person help. An effective way to do this is to have that person use two rulers; one ruler is held across the line at A-A and another is held across the line at B-B.