

A Pain in the Neck!

Have you ever gotten home from a long day at work and noticed that your neck is hurting? Well, you are not alone. Neck pain is a problem that most people will deal with at one time or another in their lives. One of the most common causes of neck pain is poor posture. Poor posture comes in many forms, including:

1. Leaning into your computer
2. Hunching over your workstation or steering wheel while driving
3. Looking down or up for extended periods without breaks
4. Cradling the phone between your neck and shoulder
5. Sleeping with your neck at the wrong angle

Another major factor of neck pain is your basic daily stress. When we are stressed, we tend to tense the muscles around our shoulders and neck. This causes the muscles in your neck to become tight, fatigued, and strained.

The next time you are feeling pain in your neck, or if you want to prevent the pain from beginning, here are a few simple changes you can make in your daily routine.

1. Take frequent breaks and change positions. We recommend at least every 30 minutes.
2. Adjust your desk, chair and computer to make sure the monitor is at eye level.
3. Avoid cradling the phone between your neck and shoulder.
4. Stretch by shrugging your shoulders or pulling your shoulder blades back.

Of course, if you have had any sort of trauma to your neck, seek medical attention immediately. Frequently, the pain and tightness associated with injuries such as whiplash will not be noticed until a day or two later. If your neck pain persists for more than a couple days or worsens, or you have any pain or numbness going down your arms, make sure to talk to your physician or physical therapist as soon as possible. For most people, making these simple changes as described above can help to alleviate a lot of the pain and tightness you may experience in your neck from daily stresses or poor posture.

A large portion of our patient population at Physical Rehabilitation Institute presents with trauma or postural related neck problems, which we have been very successful in helping our patients to overcome. So...if you are having a "pain in the neck," give us a call, schedule an appointment, and allow us to help you optimize pain-free functional movement of your neck!

www.mayoclinic.com www.apta.com www.health-news-and-information.com

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