



PDA overload! Protect your wrists & neck

text-neck*: overuse syndrome involving the head, neck and shoulders, usually resulting from excessive strain on the spine from looking in a forward and downward position at any hand held mobile device, i.e., mobile phone, video game unit, computer, mp3 player, e-reader. This can cause headaches, neck pain, shoulder and arm pain, breathing compromise, and much more.

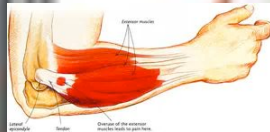
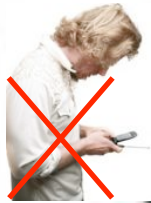
* a term originally coined by Dr. Dean Fishman [a chiropractor from Florida, www.text-neck.com]

> Long-term forward neck posture leads to "long-term muscle strain, disc herniations and pinched nerves." (*Mayo Clinic Health Letter*, March 2000)

> "Loss of the cervical curve stretches the spinal cord 5-7 cm and causes disease." (Dr. Alf Breig, neurosurgeon and Nobel Prize recipient)

> According to Rene Cailliet MD, director of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Southern California, forward head posture [FHP] can add up to 30 pounds of abnormal leverage on the cervical spine. This can pull the entire spine out of alignment. FHP results in loss of vital capacity of the lungs by as much as 30 percent. This shortness of breath can lead to heart and blood vascular disease. The entire gastrointestinal system is affected; particularly the large intestine. Loss of good bowel peristaltic function and evacuation is a common effect of FHP. It causes an increase in discomfort and pain because proprioceptive signals from the first four cervical vertebrae are a major source of the stimuli which create the body's pain controlling chemicals (endorphins). With inadequate endorphin production, many otherwise non-painful sensations are experienced as pain. FHP dramatically reduces endorphin production.

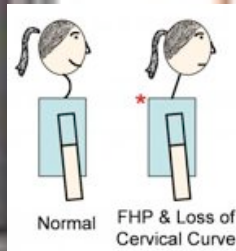
> "For every inch of forward head posture, it can increase the weight of the head on the spine by an additional 10 pounds." (Kapandji, *Phys. of the Joints*, Vol. 3)



According to Dr. Alan Hedge, director of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Research Group at Cornell University, "if you persist in typing a lot of information with your thumbs, you risk injury". Over-use of the thumb can aggravate arthritis as well as contribute to musculoskeletal disorders such as trigger thumb and de Quervain's tenosynovitis which are forms of tendonitis.

INJURY Prevention TIPS:

- > take breaks - come up for air every few minutes!
- > keep wrists neutral [see left] and neck neutral with a curve - so raise arms & relax shoulders
- > use computer & keyboard for email
- > call someone every now and then
- > stretch & see your physician



first aid/ wellness scenario #26

Answers next bulletin

? 1. When do you call EMS if rescuing an adult? a baby? ? 2. Can compression-only CPR be done?

*Answers to last 2HEALTH Bulletin's scenario:

1. What 3 items can you pack in the 72-hours kit? wind-up flashlight, non-perishable food, tarp for shelter
2. In a tornado, where is the safest place to stay? Basement or an interior room.

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