



TEXT NECK SYNDROME (A PAINFUL GIFT OF TECHNOLOGY)

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TEXT NECK SYNDROME (A PAINFUL GIFT OF TECHNOLOGY)

Text neck is a Modern age term coined to describe repeated stress injury and pain in the neck resulting from excessive watching or texting on hand-held devices over a sustained period of time. It is also often known as Turtle Neck posture. Text Neck is affected by neck posture due to excessive use of Smartphones in the wrong posture. It is a cause for increasing concern especially with children given their greater propensity to mobile phone usage.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS ?

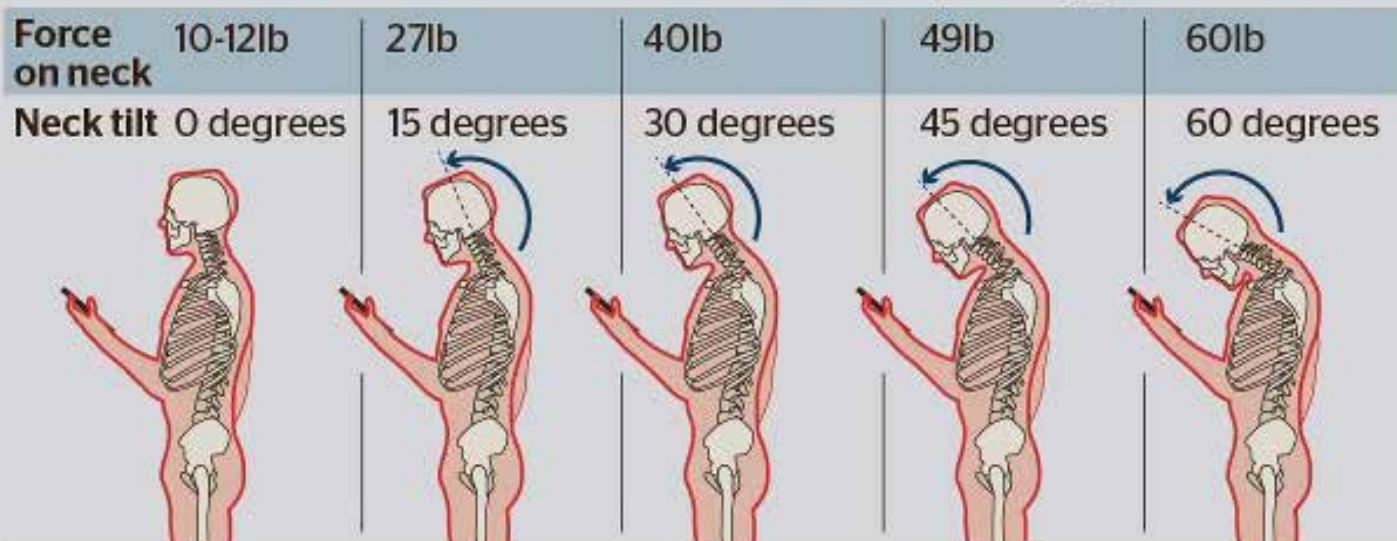
- › Stiff neck with soreness usually present when trying to move the neck after long usages
- › Eye ache
- › Dull aching or sharp or stabbing pain usually in the lower part of the neck with radiation into the shoulders and arms (If a cervical nerve becomes pinched)
- › Muscular weakness and spasm: upper back and shoulders muscles (trapezius, rhomboids, and shoulder external rotators are often weak)
- › Headache: sub-occipital muscle tightness can lead to tension-type headaches.

In extreme chronic cases it can lead to

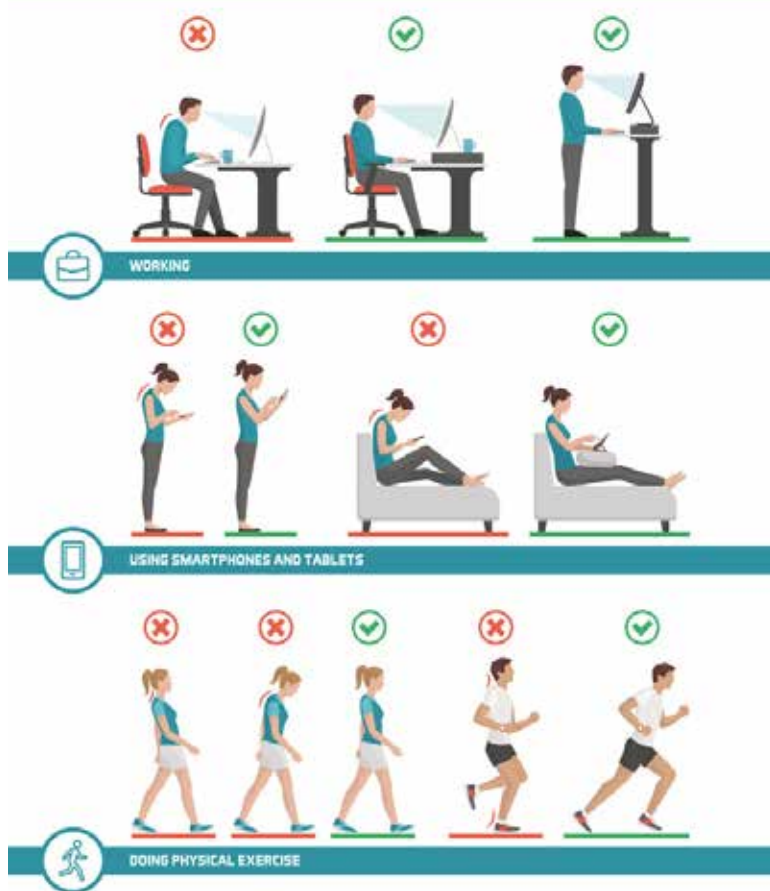
- › Increased curvature of the spine
- › Flattening of thoracic kyphosis
- › Early-onset arthritis
- › Spinal degeneration
- › Disc compression
- › Loss of lung capacity

How texting could damage your spine

Forces on the neck increase the more we tilt our heads, causing spine curvature



Tips to alleviate Text Neck



REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is found to be very effective in treating the stress injury resulting from Text Neck

Rehabilitation can be designed as a 2-4 week program.

In acute cases, pain relief is the main goal.

It can be achieved by:

- Active and passive stretches of tight muscles of neck and shoulder to improve blood flow and relieve tension
- Muscle strengthening
- Soft tissue Mobilization
- Grade 1 and 2 joint mobilization
- Ice/heat packs
- Massage therapy
- Cold laser therapy
- Posture retraining and home exercise program

PREVENTION, WHICH IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN CURE

The following suggestions should be kept in mind while using smartphones or other handheld devices:-

Raise the phone:-

- Position the device such that it reduces stress both on the head/neck and the upper extremities.
- Move the cell phone (and other devices) to eye level so the head doesn't have to be tilted.

Take frequent breaks:-

- Spend some time away from the phone or any type of head-forward posture.
- Change positions when texting (lying on one's back is an excellent way to relieve neck pressure).
- Avoid high repetitions of movements such as prolonged typing or swiping.
- Avoid holding large or heavy devices in one hand for a long duration

Stand up straight:-

- Avoid prolonged static postures
- Good posture:-with the shoulders pulled back, keeps the body aligned in a neutral position.

Arch and stretch:-

- Arch the neck and upper back backward periodically to ease muscle pain.
- Tuck the chin down toward the neck, then slowly raise it up toward the ceiling.
- Rotate the head so that it is looking out over one shoulder, then turn slowly and rotate in the other direction.
- Rotate the shoulders in a clockwise direction while holding the arms down by the sides of the body, repeat in a counter-clockwise direction

STAY FIT.

A STRONG, FLEXIBLE BACK AND NECK ARE MORE ABLE TO HANDLE EXTRA STRESS.