

Preparation prevents neck pain at the computer

Question: My job requires me to spend hours a day in front of a computer. My neck pain has gotten worse to the point it hurts all day and night. I can't give up my job, so what can I do?

Answer: Improper computer positioning can definitely contribute to neck pain.

The best solution to preventing further irritation is to give your work site an ergonomic study. Step back from your work site and examine the location of all your equipment. Here is a checklist of items to review:

1. Make sure that your chair, desk, table and workstation are at the right height for you. If more than one person will be using the same equipment, make it easy to adjust to each person.
2. Position your computer so it is at eye level or just below eye level. You do not want to be looking up at the screen, and you do not want to be looking down at a sharp angle.
3. Keep all your paperwork as close to eye level as possible. There are many stands available that allow paperwork to be placed next to computer monitors and prevent having to turn your head back and forth from paperwork to monitor.
4. Take frequent breaks. Get up, stretch tired muscles, and allow your eyes to focus on something in the distance. Doing this will help prevent eye and neck strain as well as headache.

5. Use a telephone headset if you spend long hours on the phone while also at the computer. Cradling the phone between your ear and shoulder quickly tires muscles and creates tension.
6. Breathing and relaxation exercises throughout the day help keep your focus and reduce mental and physical stress.
7. Examine other areas of your life that may stress your neck. Common problem areas include poor postures while sleeping, reading, or watching television in bed, driving in your car, lifting objects or children and many more.

Most importantly to avoid recurrent episodes of neck pain follow all of your Doctor of Chiropractic's instructions for healing and prevention. Chiropractors can examine and diagnose the cause of your neck pain. Using modern technology of X-rays and other specific testing your conditions cause can be determined so specific gentle corrections can be made. Healing is a dual effort and even though Chiropractic works it is your responsibility to make your own personal adjustments in your life activities to maintain your health and prevent injuries.

Quote of the week: *"Learning is discovering that something is possible."* – Fritz

Perls