

November

Weekly Wellness Tips

Week 2

Combatting Tech Neck

While not an official medical diagnosis, “tech neck” has become a familiar phrase. As smartphones, laptops and tablets have become everyday tools, people spend more time hunched over screens. The result is a growing number of individuals reporting stiffness, discomfort and pain in their neck and shoulders.

Tech neck refers to the strain placed on the cervical spine (the part of the spine in the neck) when a person consistently looks down at a device or sits in poor posture while using technology.

The good news is that ***tech neck is preventable and manageable***. A few small changes in daily habits can make a big difference, so consider these tips:

- Improve ergonomics. Set up your workstation to reduce unnecessary strain. Position your computer monitor so the top of the screen is at or just below eye level. Sit in a chair that supports your back, with feet flat on the floor and shoulders relaxed.
- Follow the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. This not only eases eye strain but also encourages you to reset your posture.
- Strengthen and stretch. Encouraging short stretch breaks (e.g., chin tucks, neck stretches and shoulder blade squeezes) during the workday can be particularly effective in preventing long-term strain.
- Mind your phone habits. When checking your phone, bring the device up to your eyes rather than bending your head down.

Contact a doctor if tech neck symptoms persist or worsen. Physical therapy, massage or exercise programs can help address severe discomfort.

For more tech neck tips, watch this 1-minute video from the Mayo Clinic:

<https://youtu.be/jvXckwrgzyc?si=3G4Aln62Qp5ndlkY>

