

Treatment Options

- **ART (Active Release Techniques)**
- **Massage**
- **Stretching:**
 - ◇ Pectoralis Major
 - ◇ Scalenes
 - ◇ Trapezius
- **Strengthening:**
 - ◇ Neck Crunches – strengthen the neck flexors.
- **Posture Awareness:**
 - ◇ Neck in neutral position and the shoulders in a back and down position and not allowed to roll forwards.
- **Ergonomics:**
 - ◇ People who spend long periods of time in a seated position, either at a computer or desk may be subjected to neck pain or other issues due to poor posture.
 - ◇ Changes to the work space can help alleviate issues such as neck pain and headaches by:

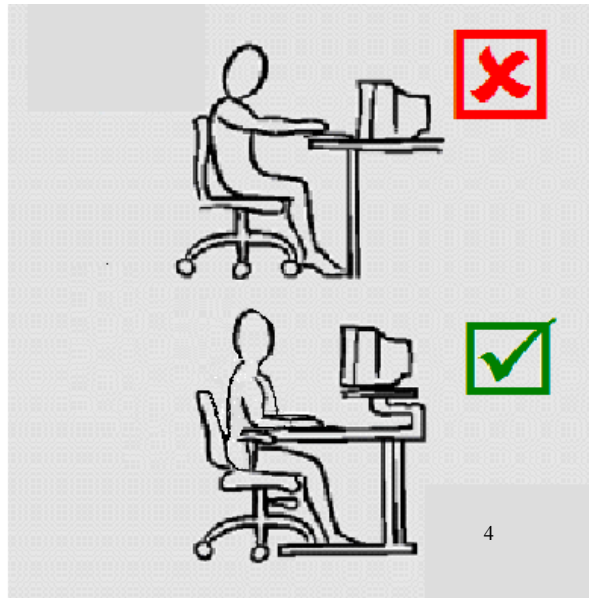
1. **Chair with support** - without proper support the muscles have to work harder to support the posture

2. **Use a headset** if spending long periods of time on the phone – most often the phone is held on the shoulder putting the neck muscles in a shortened position as the shoulder is shrugged towards the neck to hold the phone.

Ergonomics Con't:

3. **Computer screen height** – computer screen should be positioned so the top of the screen is at eye level. If the screen is too low, the neck will have increased flexion and if the screen is too high it requires more neck extension.

4. **Desk Height** - The desk should be at a height, which allows the shoulders to sit in a relaxed down and back position.



⁴Opal (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nildram.net/tutorials/surf-and-stay-healthy/>.



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Upper Body Posture: Cervical Spine and Shoulder Positioning

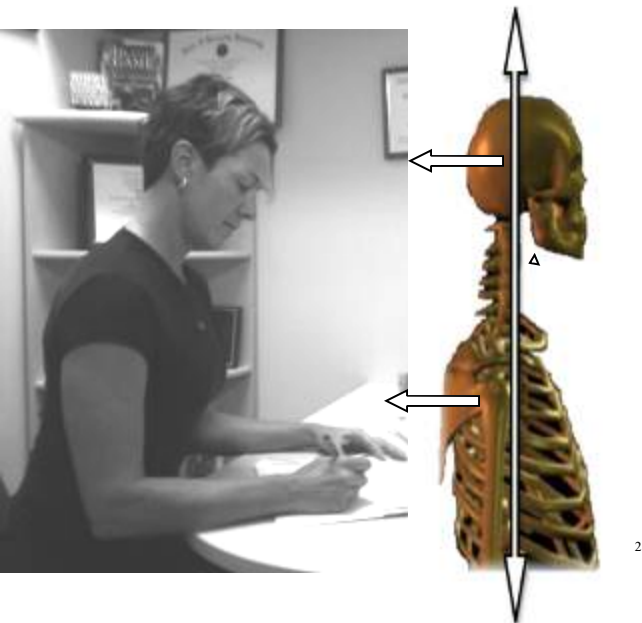


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Ideal Posture

- Ideal posture requires minimal muscle activity to maintain head and shoulder position.
- Balance is required between the neck flexor and extensors (antagonistic muscles).
- A straight line should go down through the ear lobes, the front of the neck vertebrae and thru the tip of the shoulder.¹
- The shoulders are held down and back and are stabilized in a controlled position. The chest is open and the head is not shifted forwards.



Poor Posture

- The head is often held forward with increased neck extension.
- The chin can tilt upward as the head shifts forward.
- Shoulders seem to roll forward and/or held shrugged (either both or to one side).
- Shoulder blade is then not stabilized and causes extra stress to the joints of the shoulder and cuff muscles.



Possible Signs and Symptoms Due to Postural Issues

- Cervicogenic Headaches** – “head pain which is referred to the head from bony structures or soft tissue of the neck.”³
- Decreased range of motion in the neck** from increased stress on facet joints (joints between vertebrae).
- Muscle weakness** of the neck flexor muscles.
- Muscle tightness** of the back and chest muscles.
- Referred pain, numbness and/or tingling down the arms/hands** from nerve root compression/nerve impingement.
- Shoulder joint pain** - constant ache/heaviness or sharp pain with overhead motion.
- Loss of strength and power** with sport performance and training.
- Rotator cuff tear.**
- Impingement,** chronic shoulder tendonitis.

¹ Magee, D.J. (1997). *Orthopedic Physical Assessment*. (3rd ed.). Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders Company.

² (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.dcbetterhealth.com/sw/swchannel/images/users/10281/SkelFHP.jpg>

³ Ylinen, J., Nikander, R., Nykanen, M., Kautiainen, H., Hakkinen, A. (2010). Effect of Neck Exercises on Cervicogenic Headache: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*, 42(4), 344-340.