



GORMAN
OPTIMAL
HEALTH
SOLUTIONS^{INC.}

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Pain in the Neck

Do you suffer from neck pain? If you do, you're not alone. Nearly 75 percent of American adults will suffer from neck pain at some point in their lives. And, looking at our anatomy, it's no wonder so many of us do. Though having your head perched on top of your spine gives you a great view of your environment, the set-up is rather like propping a bowling ball atop a tower of blocks. The price? Our necks are prone to injury of the muscles, ligaments, tendons, and joints. But by paying attention to our posture, doing regular stretching and strengthening exercises, and visiting our chiropractors, we can help keep our necks pain-free.

Causes of Neck Pain

Neck pain ranges from mild (annoying and distracting) to severe (incapacitating). Poor posture during normal, everyday activities such as watching TV, using a computer, reading a book, or talking on the phone can easily trigger minor neck pain. TV watching can be particularly bad for the neck if you're lying on a couch, with your head propped at an awkward angle for a prolonged period of time. Holding the phone between the jaw and shoulder (rather than in your hand), reading at a desk or table with your head hung over a book, or working with a computer monitor below eye level can also be particularly stressful for the neck. By resting and making efforts not to repeat the offending stresses on the neck, minor neck pain usually disappears on its own within a day or so.

Neck pain that won't go away or keeps coming back can signal a more serious underlying problem. Subluxations or joint restrictions; injuries such as whiplash; diseases like osteoarthritis, meningitis and tumors; congenital malformation; and degeneration (such as that in arthritis) require more than rest. A trained healthcare professional such as a doctor of chiropractic (DC) can help. He or she can determine whether the cause of your neck pain is minor and easily treatable or more serious and requiring more intensive, extended treatment. Then he or she may recommend chiropractic adjustment, massage, natural anti-inflammatory supplements, and/or strengthening and stretching exercises. In some cases, the DC will refer you to a specialist.

Prevention is Key

How can you avoid the need for treatment in the first place? The first step is to take note of your everyday posture. If your job requires a lot of phone use, consider wearing a headset. Do you slouch when you watch TV? Lie on the couch? Choose to sit upright, in a posture-supporting chair. When studying or reading, avoid putting the book or magazine on a flat surface. Instead, consider using a book prop. And, if you notice your computer monitor is below eye level, elevate it by placing it on top of a shelf or tower.

Neck pain is often caused by weak muscles in the front and tight, overactive muscles in the back of the neck. Doing daily strengthening and stretching exercises can be helpful in preventing neck pain. Try the following exercises:

- Lie flat on your back. Tuck your chin to chest and raise your head no more than an inch off the floor or bed. Hold this position until your muscles are tired (they may shake). Do this exercise three times, once or twice per day.
- In a standing or sitting position, with your neck erect and tall, keep your chin level and jut your head forward. Then, drop your chin to your neck. Place your hands on the back of your head to gently encourage a stretch of the muscles at the back of the neck. Hold this position for several seconds. Do this exercise three to five times, as much as once an hour, every day.
- Looking straight ahead, tilt your head to one shoulder. With the same-side hand, gently pull your head toward your shoulder. Hold the stretch for several seconds. Repeat on the opposite side. Do this exercise three to five times on each side, as often as once an hour, every day.

If you experience neck pain that doesn't abate within 24 hours, seek the advice of a trained healthcare specialist for the appropriate diagnosis and treatment. And remember, because chiropractors specialize in the neuromusculoskeletal system, they are some of the most well-trained healthcare professionals to consult about neck pain.

Fun Factoids

The largest pumpkin ever grown weighed 1,061 lbs.

11% of the people of the world are left-handed.

Jupiter spins so fast that there is a new sunrise every ten hours.

Chiropractic Care Can Help...
Our goal is to manipulate the spine and help stimulate your body's natural healing process.

Upcoming Lectures

Optimal Health 101-How To Stay Young The First 100 Years

Gorman Optimal Health Solutions
333 North Oxford Valley Rd.
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Wednesday, March 25, 2009
7:00 PM-8:00 PM

Tuesday, April 7, 2009
7:00 PM-8:00 PM

Wednesday, April 22, 2009
7:00 PM-8:00 PM

Call 215-9-HEALTH (943-2584) to reserve your seat for this COMPLIMENTARY
lecture!
Seating is VERY limited.