

Christina's Secrets for preventing Neck and Shoulder Pain

Tip #1: Sit Upright

Slouching increases the forces transmitted through your spine, including your neck. When we slouch, we let our head fall forward. This will cause stress, strain, and then pain.

Be sure to sit upright, preferably with your back supported. Sitting should be a supported posture where your muscles can relax.

Tip #2: Check Your Sleep Position

We spend anywhere from 6-8 hours in bed every night. It is important that you spend this time in the correct position. Many people sleep with a pillow that is too thick and it bends their neck in an awkward position all night.

Try sleeping with a thin pillow. This will allow your neck to rest in a more natural position.

Avoid sleeping on your stomach. This position will cause havoc on your spine and shoulders. Even if this position doesn't hurt now, you are setting yourself up for pain and spinal deterioration in the future.

Tip #3: Take A Look At Your Computer

Frequent computer use with poor positioning can increase neck muscle tension. Looking down at a screen will cause your neck to round and increase pressure on your discs.

Adjust your computer screen so that the top of the screen is at eye level. This way your neck muscles can relax and you won't feel like you're "falling into the computer".

Tip #4: Avoid Reading Or Using Your Phone While Lying Down

Reading while lying down leads to forward head position and

increases the pressure on the back of your neck.

Tilting your head down 45 degrees increases the pressure on your neck by 49 pounds! (Imagine how your neck might feel if you decreased this pressure.)

By limiting the time reading books or looking at your phone in bed you will ease your neck and shoulder pain.

If you are going to read in bed, be sure you are sitting upright, rather than lying down.

Tip #5: Avoid Carrying Things On One Side Of Your Body

Carrying a bag, purse, or backpack on one shoulder means that the weight is not evenly distributed.

Over time, one side of your body is under more pressure than the other, leading to neck and shoulder tension and discomfort.

Be sure to switch your carrying arm frequently and avoid carrying heavy objects with just one arm.

Tip #6 Stay Hydrated

One of the biggest mistakes that could be contributing to your pain and zapping your energy is being dehydrated. Dehydration can cause muscle aches, pains, fatigue, and dizziness.

Try to drink water throughout the day. Avoid excess caffeine, including coffee, tea, alcohol, and energy drinks, as these will dehydrate your body even more.

Tip #7: Use Ice And Heat

This may be the question we get the most. Do I use ice or heat?

Heat is best in for loosening up stiff muscles and joints. A lot of people find it useful in the morning when they're stiff and having trouble moving.

Ice is good after activity or in the evening when your neck and shoulder pains are aching or painful.

Without knowing your personal situation, the best advice I can give you is to try both ice and heat and keep using the one that makes you feel better!

Tip #8: Consult A Neck And Shoulder Pain Expert

The fastest way to take care of your neck and shoulder pain is by going to see a physical therapist. A physical therapist can listen to your story and take a look at your neck and shoulders and find out why you are having pain and stiffness.

Then a physical therapist can come up with a plan to relax your aching muscles, loosen your stiff joints, and strengthen your body so you can get back to the activities you love.

If you combine all these tips from this special guide with a visit to a hands-on physical therapist, then you will see a dramatic drop in your neck and shoulder pain and stiffness.