

# Wear and Tear from Texting Leads to Spinal Degeneration

## Take steps to avoid the dangers of “Text Neck” and Computer Posture

Research finds that increased usage of phones and computers brings about a variety of health challenges which accumulate over time. Billions of people use cell phones daily all over the world. The majority of cell phone usage occurs with the spine and neck in a flexed position of poor posture. Extended use of a cell phone with the head in forward flexion creates a variety of unwanted health challenges. Those numbers continue to rise at unprecedented rates. Doctors created terminology for new conditions and diagnoses specific to this growing epidemic. Proper care for the spine and neck prove essential to overall health. **Strategies exist to counteract the stressors attributed to text neck and computer posture.**

Cell phone usage continues to increase globally. A study performed in 2014 evaluated the effects of forward head posture due to the stresses of cell phones and other technology devices. The findings showed that computer screens, tablets, and cell phone use create forward head posture, which adds significant stress to the spine which leads to early degeneration. Loss of the natural curve in the neck leads to incrementally increased stresses on the cervical (neck) spine. The study determined the increased stress may lead to early wear, tear, and degeneration while increasing the potential needs for future surgeries.

Poor posture invariably occurs with the head in a tilted forward position and the shoulders drooping forward in a rounded position. The average person spends 2 to 4 hours a day with their head tilted forward for reading and texting on phones and other electronic devices. This amounts to 700-1400 hours of excess of abnormal cervical spine stress per year. Research shows the average high school student spends more time on their phone accounting for an extra 5000 hours of poor posture per year.



Good upper spine and body posture begins with the ears aligned with the shoulders and the scapula retracted. **With proper alignment, spinal stress diminishes.** Good posture creates less wear and tear on the spine and discs while creating an environment which translates into other health benefits. Elevated levels of testosterone, increases in serotonin, and decreased levels of cortisol represent a few additional health benefits attributed to better posture. Poor posture contributes to reductions in each of those categories. Regular Chiropractic adjustments combine with good posture habits to help reduce the stressors of text neck and computer posture. Three specific action steps help minimize the risk of spine and onerous system stress due to phone and computer usage. Take the necessary action steps to avoid the long-term outcomes of this worldwide epidemic while still enjoying the benefits which technology affords.

### **3 Action Steps to Minimize the Risks of Neck and Spine Abnormalities Due to Text Neck**

- 1) Stay on track with a Chiropractic Adjustment Plan - adjustments reduce wear and tear in the joints and discs, lower tension in muscles, and improve function of the nervous system.
- 2) Utilize Good Posture Habits and tools to support spinal curves and posture.
- 3) Drink More Water - forces routine movement and trips to the bathroom every 60-90 minutes.