

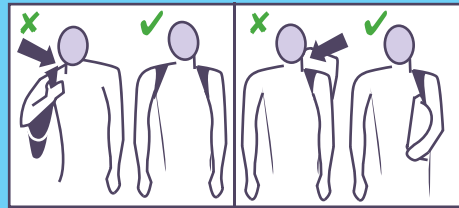


Household Jobs Overhead

If cleaning windows, hanging curtains etc. try and use a step ladder so that you are level with the job in hand. Prolonged reaching or looking up can cause pain in the shoulder and neck.

Carrying a ruck-sack or shoulder bag:

Carrying a load on one shoulder may place excessive strain on the neck. It is better to distribute the load evenly over both shoulders or support a shoulder bag from underneath. Carrying heavy loads in school bags should be avoided.



Correct posture: T

The chest lifted, shoulders relaxed, head in line with the body. The neck should feel long, straight and relaxed. Think tall.



Exercises to relieve neck/shoulder pain

Movement of the neck is generally encouraged. Some conditions require specific exercises, which should be shown by a Chartered Physiotherapist.

General Information

Chartered Physiotherapists are health professionals allied to the medical profession and carry a university qualification. They use physical means of treatment such as joint manipulation/mobilisation techniques, exercise, soft tissue treatment and electrotherapy modalities. If you wish to consult a Chartered Physiotherapist you can go directly to your local private Chartered Physiotherapist or you can ask your GP to refer you.

Chartered Physiotherapists work in hospitals and in the community where treatment is covered under the public health service. They also work in private practice and can be contacted through the professional body, or through the Golden Pages.

More information can be found at www.iscp.ie the Golden Pages or by contacting the ISCP at 01- 4022148.

Is your physiotherapist chartered?

Physiotherapy & care of your neck



Neck pain is a very common occurrence affecting 10-15% of the population at any one point in time



Physiotherapy and care of your neck

Most people can expect to experience some neck pain in their lifetime. It is not always possible to identify the exact cause of neck pain but 99% of the time it is not serious and for the majority of people it should not seriously interfere with normal activities. However, if you have suffered serious injury, or the pain is very severe or going down the arm you should seek advice from a health professional.

Whiplash injury

These injuries usually arise due to a sporting or road traffic accident as the soft tissues of the neck can be overstretched and strained. It is normal to have pain as the tissues heal but in most cases people recover in 4-6 weeks. To aid recovery it is important to remain active and try to carry out your normal activities. Research suggests that wearing a neck collar will not be of benefit. Physiotherapy including exercise and manipulation / mobilisation techniques has been shown to be effective in reducing pain and disability caused by whiplash.

Non-specific neck pain

People often report an onset of neck pain, which is not related to a specific injury. This is very common and a specific diagnosis is not required for effective treatment. Remaining active will help aid recovery and physiotherapy including exercise and manipulation/mobilisation techniques has been shown to be effective.

Arthritic changes in the neck are commonly observed on x-ray. However, there is no evidence that these are a risk factor for neck pain. Rather they are a relatively normal occurrence with age.

Headache

The neck can at times give rise to headache. This form of headache has been found to respond well to physiotherapy involving manual therapy and exercise.

Helpful Hints

Sitting:

- Avoid sitting for prolonged periods;
- Sit with your lower back well supported and take regular breaks where you get up and move around;
- If you spend a lot of time working at a computer it is a good idea to have your work-station assessed to ensure it suits you;
- If you frequently use a phone throughout the day it may be helpful to use a head-set;
- Avoid cupping the receiver between your ear and shoulder.

Driving:

- Avoid slouching in the seat;
- Make sure your back is well supported and your seat positioned correctly so that you do not need to lean forward;
- Take regular breaks if driving for long periods of time.

Sleeping:

- It is best not to sleep on your stomach;
- Ensure that the nape of the neck is fully supported by the pillows, and that the head does not sag lower than the neck, or is bent forward by too many pillows; If you are comfortable with one then just use one.