

Top 7 Tips To Treat And Prevent Neck Pain

If your neck had the flexibility of a crane or a swan, trying to parallel park would be no problem. Neither would sitting at a keyboard for hours as you input data into a computer, read email or write reports. And it certainly would make watching fireworks or craning your neck to watch a play or musical from the back rows easier. In reality, our necks don't have much flexibility. And if you keep your neck in unusual position too long – jutting forward, for example, or sleeping in an awkward position – you risk an irksome episode of neck pain. Okay, so for whatever reason, your neck hurts. Relax. Here are some ways to get rid of the pain.

1. Head For The Freezer

Applying an ice pack or ice wrapped in a washcloth can ease the acute pain and stiffness. Try it for 15 or 20 minutes.

2. Stretch Those Muscles

Stretching don't take much time, but they ease neck stiffness. And you can do them at home or at work. One example: Turn your head all the way to one side, then back to the center so you are facing straight ahead, and then all the way to the other side. Look down at the floor, bring your head back to a straight-ahead position, next look up at the ceiling, then bring your head back. Repeat a few times a day, as needed.

3. Take A Load Off Your Shoulder

A heavy purse on one shoulder strains your neck as well as your back and shoulders. Switch to a fanny pack or backpack or carry your pulse across your chest. Load heavier belongings into a suitcase on wheels, as do many flight attendants and travelers. Or buy the wheels and a couple of bungee cords from a discount store and roll your luggage along.

4. Tilt Your Chair Back

Often, neck pain is caused by jutting your head forward. The solution? Bring your reading material to you. When you read or watch television, recline your chair so that your head is supported by the back of your chair or a wall. It is fine to sit on a couch or an easy chair, as long as you change positions frequently, so that your neck doesn't get stiff.

5. Adjust Your PC Monitor

If you work at a computer, make sure you don't have to crane your neck to look at the monitor. Adjust your monitor so it is at eye level.

6. Get A Copy Holder

You can easily strain your neck from looking back and forth from the computer to copy off to the side and lower than the screen. A copy holder attached to the monitor at eye level will allow you to read documents without straining your neck.

7. Trade Up To A Down Pillow

To keep from waking up with a stiff neck, choose a pillow made of down or other pliant material or one of the orthopedic pillows instead of solid foam rubber. A good pillow follows the contours of your neck instead of leaving your neck unsupported. And sleep on your side or back, not your stomach.

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About the Author

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