Neck Pain

The physiotherapists in our practice can identify the reasons for neck pain and provide evidence-based treatment.

Because the neck is so mobile, it is easily damaged. Injury and postural problems are the most common causes of neck pain. Conditions such as arthritis or degeneration of the intervertebral disc can also cause pain.

Neck injuries

Neck injuries most often result from motor vehicle accidents, sports or occupational accidents. Damage may occur to vertebrae, joints, nerves, discs, ligaments and muscles. A common neck injury is the accelleration/ decelleration injury or 'whiplash' where the head is thrown forward or backward.

Preventing neck pain

Posture—Bad posture can cause neck pain. Ligaments are overstretched, muscles become tired and the neck joints and nerves are put under pressure. Slouching your shoulders with your head pushed forward, sleeping with your head in an awkward position, or working with your head down for long periods, will all tend to cause or worsen neck pain. So, think tall; chest lifted, shoulders relaxed, chin tucked in and head level. Your neck should feel strong, straight and relaxed.

Work—Patients need to avoid working with their head down or to one side for long periods. Frequently stretching and changing position is required. Our physiotherapists will show your patients how.

Exercise—Neck joints and muscles need to be flexible and strong with the correct neck exercises. Our physiotherapists assess for tight muscles and restricted joint movements and show patients specific exercises to treat the individuals needs.

How we can help

The physiotherapists in our practice are able to determine the source of neck pain and treat it. We may use;

- Mobilisation
- Functional and rehabilitative exercises
- Encourage normal activity
- Postural assessment, correction and advice
- Ultrasound and heat treatment
- Massage
- Self-help advice on correcting the cause of neck pain, such as pratical ergonomic tips for work and in the home
- Progression to a Clinical Pilates directional preference stabilisation program.

After a full examination, our physiotherapists will discuss the treatment options with the patient, as well conduct goal setting.

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Balance Training Reduces Ankle Sprains

With the football and netball season about to commence, it is an important time to make mention of ways to reduce ankle sprains and how to effectively overcome these injuries. Our Physiotherapists have long supported the need for effective balance training (also called proprioceptive training) to reduce the incidence and recurrence of ankle sprains. We now have even more research to support our plans.

A 3 year study of High School University Football teams reported in “The American Journal of Sports Medicine” showed that a simple 5 minute per day balance program reduced the incidence of non contact inversion ankle sprains by a massive 77%.

Physiotherapists guide and progress patients, using exercises such as:

- Single leg balance and squat on unstable surface
- Side hops onto unstable surface
- Wobble Board balancing and Squat
- Side Step and change direction
- Balances exercises with eyes closed
- Dynamic single leg balance exercise.

Conclusion

We hope this newsletter helps keep you up to date on the latest from North East Physiotherapy—we look forward to being of service to you and your patients in the near future.

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