

Dealing With Neck Pain

Have you been experiencing frequent neck pain or stiffness?

Many adults are currently struggling with this issue. Recurring pain that is not properly addressed can dramatically decrease your quality of life so it should not be ignored.

If you're experiencing persistent neck pain, the sooner you seek professional assistance the better. The licensed physiotherapists at Advantage Physiotherapy may be able to help you overcome your acute or chronic neck pain.

The Basics of Neck Pain



Neck pain is a common health issue that many adults struggle with, although it tends to affect more women than men. Once neck problems begin, individuals become more vulnerable to recurring incidents, and the majority of people who suffer from serious, chronic neck pain have indicated that their symptoms last for six months or more. In other words, neck pain can become recurrent if it is not properly managed. There are a number of different reasons why neck pain occurs, but the mostly common causes are sports and other accidental injuries such as car accidents or the gradual effect of poor daily postures we adopt in our work and home lives.

The neck allows our head to rotate and bend to follow where our eyes are looking, and as a result, neck pain may lead to significant mobility problems in daily life such as checking a blind spot while driving. Damage to joints, muscles, nerves and ligaments in the neck may result in persistent pain as well as it is sometimes hard to give these tissues their needed relative rest to heal.

The neck (cervical) region of the spine consists of seven bones that are connected by delicate, bony joints that can become irritated, damaged, or inflamed. In a condition called stenosis, the space where the nerves and blood vessels exit the spinal canal can become narrowed and increase the load or pressure to these tissues, which can cause pain. It's important to note however, that the presence of stenosis on x-ray or MRI can be found in people who have no pain at all. This condition may restrict range of motion which may be a greater source of pain or stiffness than abnormal pressure to the nerves.

A common cause of acute neck pain and stiffness is whiplash. Whiplash occurs when the neck is abruptly and forcefully jolted back and forth. This type of injury can damage ligaments, muscles, spinal bones or the joints in the neck. Car accidents frequently cause whiplash as do high impact sports and rollercoasters in some cases. A serious whiplash can lead to chronic pain for some if not properly addressed early, but it typically causes temporary neck stiffness and decreased movement. If nerve damage occurs due to a whiplash, burning or tingling sensations may be felt.

Pain Management Strategies

The variety of ways that neck problems can occur as well as the length of time that pain may persist often necessitates a consultation with a physiotherapist. Clinical studies have repeatedly shown that individuals suffering from neck pain respond well to conservative pain management approaches such as physiotherapy. This management strategy emphasizes educating patients regarding expected recovery, safe movements and showing individuals how to perform stretching exercises and strengthening routines that improve mobility and range of motion, while speeding up the recovery period.

There are some cases in which neck pain is caused by tension or stress and improving an individual's emotional response to certain stressors may be quite helpful for such individuals. Tension and stress can create unnecessary tightness in the neck muscles or strain on the ligaments and this can lead to pain. For instance, individuals who sit at their desk for extended periods of time have an increased risk of experiencing muscle tension, neck pain, and even shoulder pain. This helps reduce pain, stiffness, and inflammation, and in doing so improves range of motion. However, only an experienced professional should perform this technique.

If you are experiencing chronic neck pain that is disrupting your ability to carry out daily activities, contact a licensed physiotherapist at Advantage Physiotherapy who can consult with you regarding the possible cause of your neck pain as well as a potential solution to your problem. The physiotherapists at Advantage Physiotherapy can design a specialized pain management regimen that will help you regain a better quality of life. Call Advantage Physiotherapy today to learn more about our services.

References

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