



# TRADIES NATIONAL HEALTH MONTH

## PREVENTING NECK PAIN

### Cause

As the neck is so mobile and balances a heavy head on top of it, it can be easily strained. The most common causes of neck pain include:

#### Injury

Resulting from motor vehicle, sports or occupational accidents. Examples include 'whiplash' and muscle strains.

#### Postural problems

Slouching your shoulders, sleeping with your head in an awkward position, or working with your head in an awkward position (most commonly down) for long periods.

Below are some useful advice to help you control and prevent neck pain:

### Posture

- Think tall -- chest lifted, shoulders relaxed, chin tucked in and head level.
- Posture should be stable, balanced and relaxed.
- If working at a sitting work station recline the seat to 10--20 degrees and use the back support to keep your head balanced over your shoulders and trunk.

### Sleeping

- If you are a side sleeper, a pillow with adequate support is important, and a contour to support under the neck is advised.
- If you are a back sleeper, a small pillow is recommended -- focus the support under your neck area as feels comfortable.
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach.

### Relaxation

- Recognise when you are tense. You may be hunching your shoulders or clenching your teeth without realising it. Only when we are aware of tension can we work to release it. Mindfulness meditation can help.

### Work

- Avoid working with your head down or to one side for long periods. Frequently stretch and change position.

### Exercise

- Keep your neck joints and muscles flexible and strong with the correct neck exercises.
- Simple exercise such as walking, theraband or swimming can help.
- Make sure you warm up before and cool down after exercise with gentle stretches

### Footwear

- With every step, shock is absorbed by the feet, knees, hips and spine to decrease the force of impact. Wearing the right footwear will reduce these forces further whilst not affecting the normal function of the foot.
- Wearing the right footwear for the job protects you from stress-related injury to the ankles, knees, hips and spine.



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## HOW CAN PHYSIOTHERAPY HELP?

A physio will be able to determine the source of your neck pain and treat it.

They may use:

- Mobilisation.
- Manipulation.
- Functional and rehabilitative exercises.
- Encouraging normal activity.
- Postural assessment, correction and advice.
- Laser, ultrasound, electrotherapy and heat treatment.
- Advice regarding work role modifications if applic
- Massage.

For more information go to

**[WWW.TRADIESHEALTH.COM.AU](http://WWW.TRADIESHEALTH.COM.AU)**

and see the resources available.



**Pain  
Breaker**

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