

FIX FORWARD HEAD POSTURE

LYNFIT

Your Health Depends On It!

If your shoulders are rounded over, you're losing height, getting more headaches, and your neck and backaches have become a daily occurrence, forward head posture may be to blame.

What is Forward Head/Neck Posture? Forward head/neck posture (aka "Text Neck") is a common condition in today's tech-heavy world. This poor posture condition also leads to that crepey turkey neck in women over age 60 as their skin begins to thin and age. Forward head posture is when the head is out in front of our body versus being stacked on top of our spine the way God intended it to be, which recruits the core muscles to help us stand or sit up straight. Technically speaking, it's when the skull is leaning more than an inch over the atlas, which is the first vertebrae in the neck. In simple terms, it's when your skull is sticking out in front of your body.

Did you know that forward head posture is the most common postural deformity, and it affects between 66% and 90% of the population including young kids and teens?

Why is this posture so bad? Lots! For starters, it causes all sorts of persistent neck and upper back pain and chronic headaches that can be severe. Since everything on our body is connected, this postural problem can spiral into all-over body aches and pains that spiral out of control if left untreated. This slouchy posture also looks awful and makes the skin on our neck sag and become crepey.

In a short speech, when we don't sit or stand up straight (head stacked over our spine, keeping our body in a straight line) this causes the muscles in the back of our neck to slouch forward and get all bunched up. They can become hard, tight, and painful. This also causes the muscles that extend from your shoulders to your head to go into spasm. These spasms become chronic conditions that hold your head in this new deformed posture. Many doctors believe this is the main cause of most chronic headaches today. Many people have tender or painful spots on the back of the neck (also known as trigger points) that can cause the domino effect and cause pain in other areas. Remember, everything is connected. Even our bowel habits can be affected.

The good news is there is more help than you think, and **IT'S FREE!**

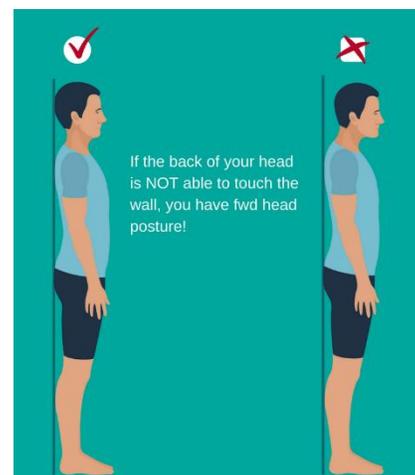
In less than five minutes daily, you can alleviate this posture deformity. In fact, if you're compliant, you can completely reverse it, no matter how bad it's become! It's up to you and all you have to do is follow momma's instructions and stand up straight, shoulders back, and pull your chin in. Don't forget to do this when you're seated too; especially when you're working on your computer or texting. I tell my clients to **"THINK UP, LOOK UP, and you'll end up STRAIGHTENED OUT!"**

How do I know if I have forward head posture? It's simple – try this test.

- Stand with your back against the wall with your legs shoulder-width apart
- Press your buttocks against the wall and make sure that your shoulder blades are also in contact with the wall

****If this is an issue, roll your shoulders up, back and press them down in back of you as if you're trying to get your rear shoulder blades into the back pocket of your pants. Squeeze your shoulder blades together behind you as if trying to suction them into the wall behind you (that's a serious posture perfecter). This can quickly help you get your shoulders into a more neutral position, and stop the slouching, all by pressing your body into a wall.**

- Next up... the head. First, check your head position – is the back of your head touching the wall, or it is out in front of your body? If your head is not touching the wall you have forward head posture, but I'm guessing you've already figured that out and should do your best to correct it.



A study published in the “Journal of Physical Therapy Science” breaks it down nicely and confirms the health issues many of us are dealing with can be helped just by correcting our posture, which also makes our core work more efficiently. Our entire body can become stronger and more fit, which is the best and most effective solution to aches and pains – **no drugs needed!**

- The muscles and joints at the front of the neck become weak, while the muscles in the upper back and shoulders get tight.
- The center of gravity of your head shifts forward (anteriorly), which increases the load on your neck (for every inch of forward movement, there is an extra 10 pounds of weight placed on your neck!). This can consequently lead to musculoskeletal, neural, and vascular system dysfunction.
- The changes that occur with forward head posture can lead to persistent and abnormal pressure in the muscles, tissues, and nerves of both the neck and shoulders, which can lead to rounding of shoulders (increased thoracic kyphosis) and herniated discs in an effort to compensate, which results in a higher load being placed on the back and shoulder muscles (Like Trapezius).
- When you combine all of these changes, you'll eventually end up with a condition called “tension neck syndrome” – symptoms of this condition can mimic tension headache.

It doesn't stop there... forward head posture doesn't just affect the neck and shoulders; the center of gravity of your entire body is also altered, affecting your torso and every joint in your body. Your body will try to adapt to these postural-positional changes by altering the balance control mechanisms of the body, which actually decreases your ability to balance when engaging in different activities throughout the day, and increases your risk of injury. You basically tilted forward, and gravity pulls you down.

Here are a few of the Forward Head Posture Symptoms:

- Muscle tightness
- Kyphosis (excessive rounded shoulders) - “Humpback”
- Neck tightness/pain
- Back pain (from top of your head all the way down to the base of your spine, and it can travel down your leg)
- Muscle spasms
- Restricted breathing/shortness of breath
- Headaches and migraines (if they are chronic, this is most likely why)
- Insomnia
- Sleep apnea
- Chronic fatigue
- Numbness and tingling of the arms and hands
- Temporal mandibular joint (TMJ) pain

Forward Head Posture can also escalate into the following if left untreated:

- Osteoporosis (and related fractures)
- Poor shoulder mobility
- Pinched nerves
- Cervical (Neck) spine arthritis
- Shoulder blade pain (impingement due to forward slump)
- Bulging discs
- Herniated discs

What causes this postural deformity/Forward Head Posture?

- Always looking down at your phone/texting
- Computer screens that are too low (they should be at eye level, and while in corrective mode, it's even a good idea to place the screen higher so you're looking slightly up temporarily)
- Bad habit of always looking down (especially in sports)
- Driving with poor posture
- Depression can make people look down more
- Certain professions are more at risk - anyone who looks down

- Sports that involve the dominant use of one side of the body (i.e. golf, tennis, hockey, baseball, etc.) and musicians such as drummers are especially at high risk
- Previous neck strains or sprains
- Sleeping with your head elevated too high on pillows
- Frequently sleeping on a sofa with your head propped on the armrest
- Carrying heavy backpacks

Bad posture causes the muscles in the front of the neck to become weak and unable to perform its job, and the neck muscles in the back of the neck become too strong, causing an imbalance in your neck muscles. The weakened muscles include, but are not limited to the following:

- Longus Colli (front part of neck)
- Longus Capitis (front part of neck)
- Infrahyoid and suprahyoid (front part of neck)
- Rhomboids (upper back muscles)
- Serratus anterior (along the side of the ribs connecting to shoulder blade)
- Posterior rotator cuff (back part of the shoulder)
- Lower trapezius (mid-back)

The tightened muscles can include, but are also not limited to:

- Suboccipitals (base of the skull)
- Sternocleidomastoid (side and front of neck)
- Upper trapezius (upper back)
- Pectoralis minor and major (chest muscles)
- Levator scapulae (neck down to shoulder blade)
- Subscapularis (shoulder blade area)
- Latissimus dorsi (mid to lower back)

SO, STAND UP STRAIGHT as if your health depends on it because it does!

Practicing good posture every day while performing your daily activities, combined with stretching and strengthening your whole body, especially the muscles involved in forward head posture, can help you correct this postural abnormality.

Here are 5 Posture Correction Exercises You Can Do Anywhere

Remember, all the exercise in the world can't replace what good posture can. Start by taking a deep cleansing breath and exhale out all of your stress before you begin.



1. MASSAGE YOURSELF THROUGHOUT THE DAY!

(aka Sternocleidomastoid (SCM) Self Massage)

Self-massage helps more than we realize. It will release the SCM (Sternocleidomastoid) muscle, which tends to be overactive on most individuals, especially when stress is involved.

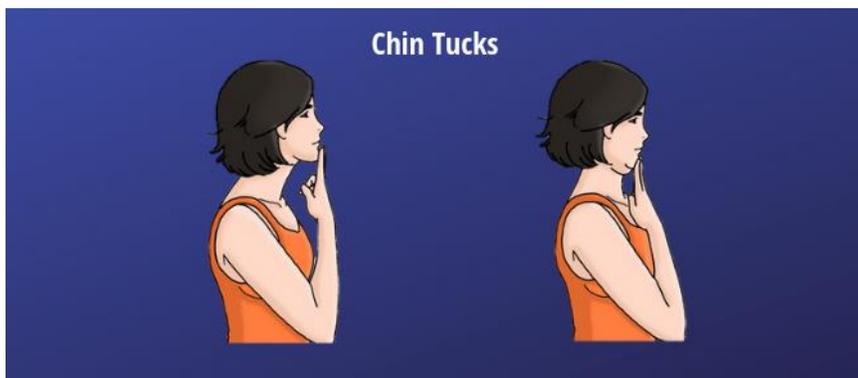
- Begin in either a standing or seated position.
- Locate your SCM (there is one on each side of your neck that runs from behind your ear to approximately the middle of your throat and connects to your collarbone – in a “V” pattern – and it will feel like a tight band of muscle).

**You may find it helpful to turn your head in the opposite direction to find your SCM (i.e. turn your head to the right to locate your left SCM).

- Once you locate the SCM, gently massage it by pinching it or pressing into it with your fingers.
- Make sure to go up and down the whole length of the muscle.
- Aim to massage the muscle for about 1 minute on each side of your neck.

** Avoid pressing too deep or you might hit other tender neck structures.

** Avoid rubbing on any pulsating areas as these are blood vessels in the neck.



** Your eyes should stay level and you should feel like the back of your neck is lengthening or "pulling up."

3. CHIN TUCKS EXERCISE

This exercise will activate and strengthen your deep cervical muscles (front of the neck muscles).

- Place 2 fingers at the bottom of your chin.
- Gently tuck your chin in and retract your head backwards. At the same time, use your fingers to keep the chin tucked in the entire time.
- Hold the end position for 3 to 5 seconds.
- Relax your neck for a moment (let the neck come forward).
- Aim for 2 to 3 sets of 10 repetitions.

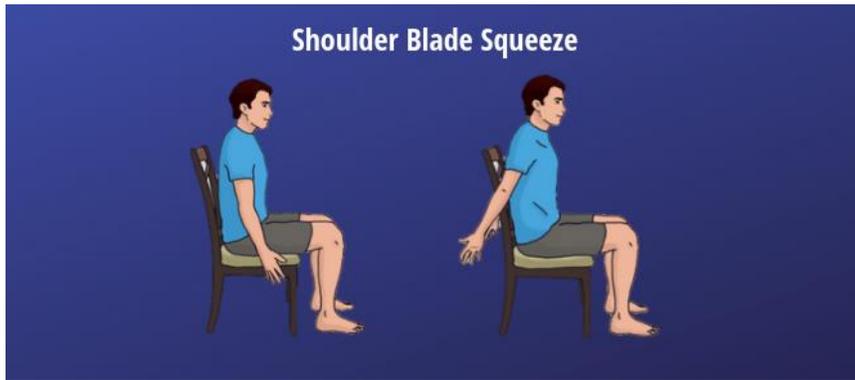


** Keep your chin tucked as you do this stretch.

2. NECK FORWARD FLEXION

This will stretch the back of your neck muscles including the Suboccipital muscles.

- First, tuck your chin in using 2 fingers of one hand.
- Place your other hand on the back of your head and apply a gentle force down as you pull your head towards your chest.
- When you feel a stretch at the back of your neck, hold the position for 20 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat this stretch 3 times.



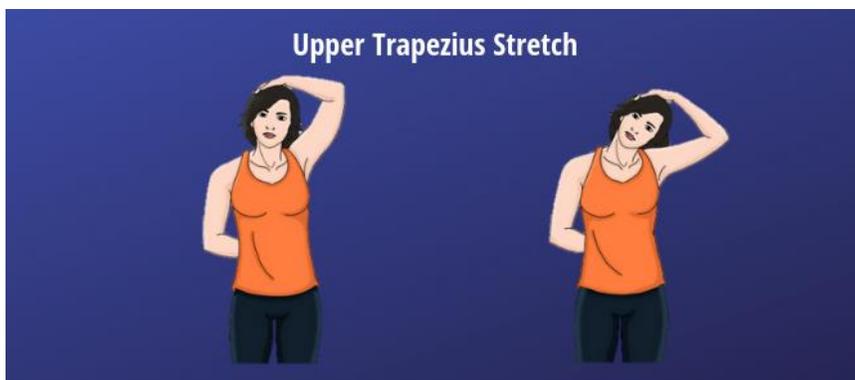
** Breathe normally as you do these reps.

5. SHOULDER BLADE SQUEEZE

(aka Brugger's Relief Position)

This exercise will activate and strengthen your low and mid back muscles including Low and Mid Trapezius.

- Position your feet and knees slightly wider than your hips and slightly rotated outwards.
- Maintain a chin tuck and raise your chest up, allowing your spine to be in a neutral position.
- Rest both of your arms down by your sides.
- Now bring your arms back and externally rotate them so that your thumbs are pointing backwards.
- Hold this position for 5-10 seconds and release.
- Aim for 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions.



4. MID SCALENE & UPPER TRAPEZIUS STRETCH

This will stretch out the neck and upper back muscles (Scalene & Upper Trapezius) which get very tight on individuals with this forward neck syndrome.

- Start either in a standing or seated position.
- Place one of your hands on the opposite side of your head.
- Now bring the head down towards your ear.
- Use the hand overhead to press your neck down – to get a deeper stretch (Not too hard).
- Hold for 20-30 seconds and do 2-3 sets.

Now that you know how crucial getting straightened out is, we can go over the nutrients your body will need to carry out all these functions. If you're already in pain and suffering, nourishing your body is even more important. You'll also get pain relief naturally, so you can ease up on over-the-counter medications that make things worse (most are just a quick fix to mask pain, but they also prevent healing, which should be your goal if you're serious about getting better).

In order to heal, there are specific nutrients that the body requires, in very specific amounts. Even if you eat perfectly, supplementing your diet with Complete Whey Protein, Daily Joint Recovery & Repair with Collagen and Pure Omega 3 should be taken to ensure your body gets exactly what it needs consistently. The nutrients delivered in Daily Joint Recovery & Repair are clinical doses that are proven to work when these amounts are used.

- Glucosamine 2000 Mg
- Chondroitin 1200 mg
- Opti-MSM 500 mg
- Collagen 50 mg
- Vitamin C 60 mg

When these nutrients are taken in this liquid form they are 10x more powerful, so if you haven't had success using supplements previously, you will when you take these!

The supplements listed above can also help prevent osteoporosis caused by "Text Neck," and don't forget that Complete Whey Protein daily is a better source of protein and works synergistically with the other supplements, so they all work better as a team.

Less alcohol, more water, and daily walks in conjunction with the supplements suggested, and these neck-strengthening exercises can help reverse your condition and help you live leaner and stronger. We have more control over these health issues than we think. They are all not only preventable, but they can also be reversed with the right treatment plan. Now you have what it takes!

If you need help, please reach out... we are happy to help!