

POSTURE ALIGNMENT

Improving your posture relieves pain and promotes strength and flexibility. There are many exercises that can help. A good first step is to be aware of what proper posture is standing, sitting, or walking.

It's especially important to practice good posture if you sit at a desk for many hours at a computer. To have correct posture at work:

- Use a chair that supports your back.
- Keep your feet flat on the floor.
- Position your screen at eye level.
- Position your keyboard so your hands and wrists aren't strained.
- Use a mouse that doesn't strain your wrist.

Good posture takes practice as well as awareness. If your regular posture is slumping, work at correcting it through exercise and good practices. For example, position your phone or other screen at eye level, so you are not bending over it.

HOW TO CHECK POSTURE

You can get a feel for what good posture feels like with this simple test:

- Stand against a wall with your head, shoulders, hips, and feet touching the wall.
- Now move your arms up and down against the wall 10 times.
- When you finish the exercise and walk away, your body should be properly aligned.

OTHER TREATMENTS

In most cases, an exercise routine helps relieve pain associated with FHP. Exercise also improves your

posture. You may want to consult with a physical or occupational therapist or chiropractor to help plan a specific exercise routine for your needs. They can also help you develop better ways to sit or stand and improve your workstation.

A 2017 study of different types of exercise and stretches found no significant differences in results.

All the exercise routines helped improve FHP.

Another 2017 study found that the use of kinesio tape was also helpful in improving FHP but noted that exercise was more effective.

SUMMARY

Forward head posture is very common today as people spend long periods of time bending over a smart phone or other device.

FHP disrupts your normal body alignment and can be painful or have other side effects.

Exercise and stretching are effective in relieving pain and restoring proper posture.

Fixing FHP requires paying attention to your posture and maintaining stretching and specific exercises throughout the day.



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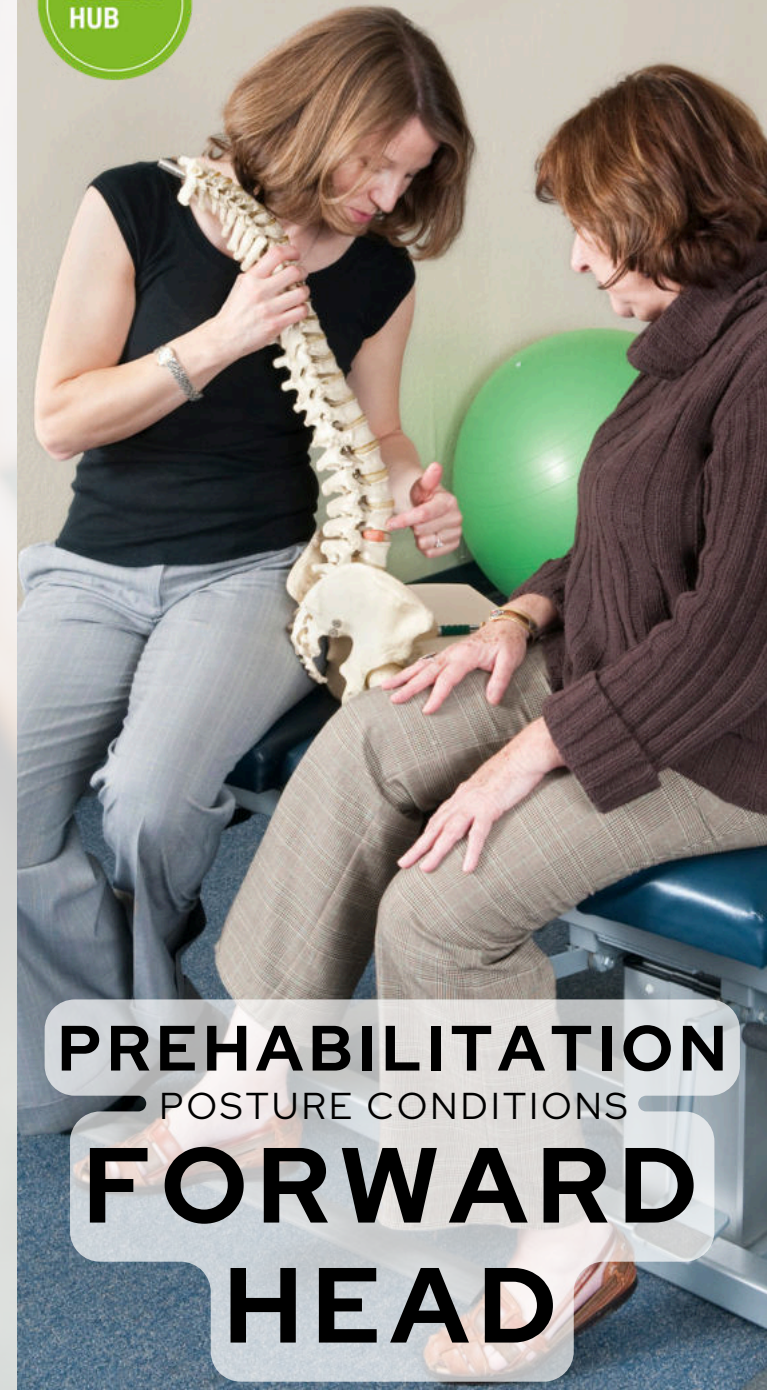
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Danny Kavanagh

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PREHABILITATION
POSTURE CONDITIONS
**FORWARD
HEAD**

WHAT IS FORWARD HEAD POSITION (FHP)

Forward head posture (FHP) is a common condition where your head is positioned with your ears in front of your body's vertical midline. In normal or neutral head posture, your ears line up with your shoulders and midline. FHP can cause neck pain, stiffness, an unbalanced gait, and other side effects. It's also often associated with rounded shoulders, called kyphosis.

The good news is that you can usually fix it: Stretching and strengthening exercises along with paying attention to good posture relieves side effects and restores better posture. FHP is also called "text neck" because it results from prolonged bending toward a computer screen or hunching over a laptop or cell phone. It's also associated with the loss of muscle strength in the aging process.

CAUSES OF FHP

FHP often results from hunching over an electronic device or slumping at your desk to look at a computer screen for prolonged periods. Studies show that specific stretching and strengthening exercises and manual therapy by a chiropractor or physical therapist can help restore normal alignment of your head and neck and relieve side effects.

Other possible causes of FHP include:

- Driving hunched over the wheel for long periods.
- Occupations that require you to lean forward, such as desk work.
- Carrying a heavy backpack & long term bad posture (slouching).
- Sleeping with your head up too high or reading in bed.
- Muscle weakness in the upper back.
- Diseases such as arthritis and bone degeneration.



SYMPTOMS / SIDE EFFECTS OF FHP

FHP can change the muscles of your upper back, neck, and shoulder that support your head. When your posture is misaligned, it can overload these muscles and connective tissue. This changes muscle length and strength. The muscles at the front of your neck get shorter and weaker, and those at the back of your neck lengthen and tighten.

FHP also affects the nerves, tendons, and ligaments involved with those muscles.

Side effects may include:

- Chronic neck pain.
- Tight neck muscles.
- Decreased range of neck motion.
- Headaches.
- Back pain.
- Jaw pain in the temporomandibular joint.
- Numbness and tingling in arms and hands.
- Decreased balance control.
- Muscle spasms.
- Herniated or other disc problem.

TREATING FHP

Many of the stretches and exercises designed to counteract FHP are simple and can be worked into your daily routine. Deep breathing can also help your posture.

This leaflet will give you a few exercises to help with the condition.

CHIN TUCKS

Chin tucks can be done almost anywhere, whether sitting or standing. It helps strengthen your neck muscles.

- Keep your head straight and your chin parallel to the floor. Pull your chin back toward your chest, as though you're making a double chin.
- While your chin is tucked in, move the back of your head away from the base of your neck. Hold the position for three deep breaths.
- Return to a normal chin position, and repeat.

CHIN TUCKS LYING DOWN

This is a good stretch to do just before getting out of bed in the morning.

- Lie flat on your back, with a small towel roll under your neck.
- Tuck your chin in.
- Return to a normal chin position, and repeat.

CHIN TUCKS AGAINST A WALL

This exercise also helps you with proper posture.

- Stand with your shoulders, head, and back flat against a wall.
- Tuck your chin in.
- Hold for a few seconds.
- Return to a normal chin position, and repeat.
- From the same starting position, put both arms up against the wall, palms out.
- Move your arms up and down against the wall.

FORWARD NECK STRETCH

This is a variation on a basic chin tuck.

- Standing or sitting, tuck in your chin, using two fingers of one hand.
- Put your other hand on the top of your head and push gently as you pull your head toward your chest until you feel a stretch.
- Hold the stretch for 20 seconds.
- Return to a normal chin position and repeat three times.

YOGA POSE FOR NECK PAIN

Many yoga poses can help relieve tension and pain in your neck and shoulders. Here is one simple example:

- Stand with your feet aligned with your hips.
- Bend forward slowly, slightly bending your knees.
- Bring your hands to the floor or to your lower legs.
- Tuck in your chin and let your head and neck relax. If you can do it comfortably, make circles with your head, or move your head from side to side, to help relieve tension.
- Hold the position for at least one minute.
- Roll your spine up to standing, bringing your arms and head up last.